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'Co-operate with Government to abolish Child Labour'

Message of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami on 'World Day Against Child Labour' which falls on 12.06.2017 (*English Translation*)

"To create awareness throughout the world against child labour, every year June 12 is observed as 'World Day Against Child Labour'. It is our foremost duty to retrieve children forced into labour and improve their future by giving them regular education.

The Tamil Nadu Government, working on the lines shown by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is implementing countless schemes to abolish child labour totally and create a new generation endowed with intelligence and strength. The schemes include free education, nutritious meal, school uniform, text books, note books, educational implements, school bags, footwear, all at no cost, bus pass for free travel, bicycles, laptops at no cost, incentives to lower the number of drop outs, retrieving children from the labour market and providing them education in special training centres and giving monthly financial assistance to ex-child labour prosecuting higher education.

A pioneer in eliminating child labour practices, the Tamil Nadu Government is rigorously implementing the amendment to the law brought about by the Central Government, totally banning adolescents below 18 years of age also from being employed in hazardous jobs.

On this day, I appeal to parents, the general public and industrial establishments to respect the rights of children and cooperate with this Government's endeavours to make Tamil Nadu "a State bereft of child labour".

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This Government is one that follows the footsteps of Hon'ble Amma; one that carries out the ideas of Amma; one that implements welfare schemes for people on the path of Amma; one that acts only for the welfare of the people. This is your Government; one that cares for your welfare.

Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami
- Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

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First Wrapper

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** met Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi at his residence in New Delhi on 24.05.2017 and presented him a memorandam on various development schemes for the State.

Chief Minister raises slew of issues with Prime Minister for 'immediate attention' of Centre

D.O. letter dated 24.05.2017 addressed by **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami,** Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to **Shri Narendra Modi,** Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

I would like to raise with you the following important issues relating to Tamil Nadu which require the immediate attention of the Government of India:-

1. Approval of Tamil Nadu's Bills seeking exemption from National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for the State Government Quota seats.

2. Setting up of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Tamil Nadu.

3. Release of pending claims under National Agriculture Insurance Scheme and Pradhan Mantri Fasal BimaYojana (PMFBY).

4. National Project for Improvement and Rehabilitation of Irrigation systems in Cauvery Basin.

5. Construction of dams / check dams across Bhavani River by Kerala.

6. Inter-linking of Peninsular Rivers (Pamba-Achankoil-Vaippar link).

7. Central Government support for Kudimaramath, an age old practice of people's participation in management of water resources.

8. Release of pending grants to Tamil Nadu.

9. Release of boats belonging to Indian Fishermen by Sri Lanka.

I enclose a brief note on each of these issues. I request you to kindly instruct the Ministries concerned to resolve these issues relating to Tamil Nadu at the earliest, given their urgency.

1) APPROVAL OF TAMIL NADU'S BILLS SEEKING EXEMPTION FROM NATIONAL ELIGIBILITY CUM ENTRANCE TEST (NEET) FOR THE STATE GOVERNMENT QUOTA SEATS

The concept of NEET was introduced with the basic objective of having a fair admission system for private medical colleges and to protect children from a multiplicity of examinations. This objective continues to be met as NEET is followed in Tamil Nadu for the private colleges, and Deemed Universities for their management quota seats and All India Quota Seats in State Government Colleges. **Tamil Nadu's system of admission applies only to State Government colleges and to seats surrendered by Private Colleges to the State Government quota**

and to students domiciled in Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu's existing system meets the test of fairness and transparency. Further, the State also has a policy of starting one Government Medical College every year, by investing around Rs.250 crore every year, with a view to not only provide opportunity for students to study MBBS, but also to strengthen the Public Health System.

Introduction of NEET would nullify the policy initiatives taken to achieve specific socio-economic objectives, as it would favour urban, well off students. NEET places students from the State Board at a total disadvantage vis a vis CBSE students, as the syllabus, methodology and the content of the State Board and the examination pattern are quite different. The proportion of rural students joining Medical courses has increased from 50 % to 63% in the past decade. The access that Tamil Nadu has provided to rural students from poor socio-economic backgrounds to medical education would be completely jeopardized by NEET. Now the students in the State are used to a system that relies on the marks in the final examination marks and have a bona fide expectation that the system would continue. **Replacing the present system with NEET is a very emotive issue and there is unanimity amongst all political parties in the State on this issue as it is not in tune with the existing policy of admissions to the Medical and Dental colleges.**

The current policy of admissions was introduced by the Government of Tamil Nadu after following a number of steps, starting from 2005, towards systematizing the admission process to medical colleges. Only after careful consideration, the State Government later abolished the entrance examinations for professional undergraduate courses in the State, by enacting the Tamil Nadu Admission in Professional Educational Institutions Act, 2006. This Act was finally given effect to after receiving the assent of the President under Article 254(2) of the Constitution. **This Act has been upheld by a decision of the Division Bench of the Madras High Court which was affirmed by the Apex Court.**

This measure was taken keeping in view the interests of students, particularly from the weaker sections and rural areas, to ensure that a level playing field is created. The Government of Tamil Nadu has taken the consistent stand that rural students and students from poorer socio-economic backgrounds will be unable to compete with urban elite students in such Common Entrance Examinations, which are designed to favour the urban elite. The rural students will be put to great disadvantage because they lack the resources to enroll in training institutions and access materials available to urban students. A large number of socially and economically backward meritorious rural students have benefited by the Government of Tamil Nadu's decision to abolish the Common Entrance Examination.

For admission to Postgraduate courses, the Government of Tamil Nadu gives preference to those who have served in rural areas, with special weightage for those working in hilly and tribal areas. The State Government has also successfully obtained and enforced bonds from those completing Postgraduate education

in Government Medical Colleges to serve the State Government for a minimum period, which has helped us to meet the need for specialist medical manpower in Government Hospitals.

Tamil Nadu is in an unique position as the only State where admissions to Professional courses is based on marks in the School Leaving examination not a separate entrance examination. More than 98% of students in the State study in the State board. In 2016-2017, in the State Board, 4.20 lakh students studied in the science stream with Biology in 6,877 Higher Secondary schools while only 4,675 students studied in the same stream in 268 Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) schools in Tamil Nadu. More importantly, the CBSE schools in Tamil Nadu are mostly found in large urban centres. **School leaving examinations in Tamil Nadu have been conducted in a transparent manner and with unimpeachable integrity.** Tamil Nadu's Health Education and Health Human Resources are amongst the strongest in the country, making it a Health Tourism destination. The State has the largest number of Government Medical Colleges. There are more than 1 lakh Doctors in the State who are sought after elsewhere in the country and the world.

Government of Tamil Nadu has obtained a legal opinion that a State legislation on continuing the present system of admission for State Government Colleges and seats surrendered to the State quota would not be ultra vires of the Constitution, provided Presidential Assent is obtained under Article 254 (2) as was done for the Bill in 2006. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has held the conduct of an entrance examination does not fall within the purview of Entry 66 in List I (Union List) of the Seventh Schedule which covers "Co-ordination and determination of standards in institutions for higher education or research and scientific and technical institutions". The State Government's competence to enact legislation derives from Entry 25 of List III (Concurrent List) which covers "Education, including technical education, medical education and universities, subject to the provisions of Entries 63, 64, 65 and 66 of List I; vocational and technical training of labour".

In Modern Dental College and Research Centre Vs. State of M.P. (2016) 7 SCC 353 a Five Judge Bench headed by Justice Anil Dave has observed as follows:-

"To our mind , Entry 66 in List I is a specific Entry having a very specific and limited scope. It deals with co-ordination and determination of standards in institutions of higher education or research as well as scientific and technical institutions. The words 'co-ordination and determination of standards' would mean laying down standards. Thus when it comes to prescribing the standards for such institutions of higher learning, exclusive domain is given to the Union. However, that would not include conducting of examination etc., and admission of institutions or prescribing the fee in these institutions of higher education etc.,".

Therefore issue of admission is covered by Entry 25 of List III. The Bench also stated that "Once the notifications under the Central statutes for conducting the CET called 'NEET' become operative, it will be a matter between the States and the Union, which will have to be

sorted out on the touchstone of Article 254 of the Constitution. We need not dilate on this aspect any further". **Therefore, GOI can permit a State specific legislation on admission to under Article 254 (2).**

Based on legal advice received, the "Tamil Nadu Admission to MBBS and BDS Courses Bill, 2017" and the "Tamil Nadu Admission to Post Graduate Courses in Medical and Dentistry Bill, 2017" were introduced and unanimously passed in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on 01.02.2017. Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu has reserved the Bills for the assent of President of India under Article 254(2) of the Constitution of India on 18.02.2017. I presented a Memorandum to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 27.02.2017 seeking early approval of the Government of India and Presidential assent for the two Bills.

As feared, in respect of the Post Graduate Medical and Dental courses, despite the assurances from Government of India, the High Court has ruled that the time tested Tamil Nadu policy of reservation of Post Graduate degree courses cannot be given and the State would have to follow the MCI regulations on incentive marks and not the State pattern followed till last year leading to agitation by the Government doctors which has since been called off.

Tamil Nadu issued its prospectus for the Post Graduate Medical and Dental courses, following NEET-PG as the entrance examination and continuing the existing policy of reserving 50 per cent of State quota of Government seats for the candidates in Government service with the preferential marking system followed in earlier years. This was done keeping in mind that the Hon'ble Union Health Minister in his D.O.letter addressed to the late Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, dated: 06.09.2016 had given an assurance that States may impose conditions, as they deem fit, on State quota seats at UG/PG level.

As per the Regulation 9 of Post Graduate Medical Education Regulations, 2000, there is no reservation for in-service candidates for PG degree courses and no incentive marks for the persons working in rural/hilly areas. A piquant issue has arisen as the High Court of Madras has directed the State Government to follow Regulation 9 (IV) of PG Medical Regulations, 2000, by adding upto 30% marks (at the rate of 10% for one year) secured by the petitioners in NEET exam while preparing merit list for admission to PG courses for the academic year 2017-2018 holding that the Regulation 9 is only effective and permissible basis for granting admission to in-service candidates. As the Government Doctors who are in service aspiring for continuing their PG medical courses with the existing system of awarding marks for experience were seriously affected by the High Court order and expressed their protest. However, the counselling has since started based on the High Court orders by following the MCI guidelines. The lack of assent of the Bill was one of the main reasons that the State could not protect its existing policy of Post Graduate admissions.

I had written to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 20.04.2017 and 25.04.2017 detailing various judgements of the Supreme Court and legal position and emphasized that the permanent

solution to ensure continuance of the present system of admission to PG courses in Medicine and Dentistry with statutory backing is to obtain the Presidential assent for the two pending State Bills, namely the "Tamil Nadu Admission to MBBS and BDS Courses Bill, 2017" and the "Tamil Nadu Admission to Post Graduate Courses in Medical and Dentistry Bill, 2017" and requested to expedite the same.

I request the Government of India that the approval for the above two Bills may be accorded immediately and the Presidential assent accorded to enable the State to continue its existing fair and transparent system of admission to Government Medical Colleges and Dental Colleges in the State.

2) SETTING UP OF ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS) IN TAMIL NADU

The proposal to establish an AIIMS in Tamil Nadu was announced in the Union Budget 2015-2016. Five sites proposed by the State Government at Sengipatti in Thanjavur District, Thoppur in Madurai District, Pudukkottai Town in Pudukkottai District, Perundurai in Erode District and Chengalpattu in Kancheepuram District and all the details required by the Government of India were furnished. Although a Central Team visited Tamil Nadu as early as 23rd - 25th April, 2015 and inspected all the sites and submitted its report to the Government of India, so far the final decision on the location has not been announced by the Government of India. It is learnt that Sengipatti in Thanjavur District has been identified as the best suited location for setting up of AIIMS. Until March, 2017, it was informed by Government of India that the report of the Central team is under consideration. However, thereafter, the Ministry has sent a communication that a report on the sites under 'challenge method' may be sent. The State Government has sent its reply on 04.05.2017, although the "Challenge Method" for site location has not yet been formally notified by the NITI Aayog.

The final decision on the location of AIIMS in Tamil Nadu has so far not been announced. I request that the decision to locate the proposed AIIMS at Sengipatti in Thanjavur District may be announced forthwith and the financial sanction accorded by the Government of India without further delay.

3) RELEASE OF PENDING CLAIMS UNDER NATIONAL AGRICULTURE INSURANCE SCHEME AND PRADHAN MANTRI FASAL BIMA YOJANA (PMFBY)

i) NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL INSURANCE SCHEME 2015-2016

Government of Tamil Nadu has implemented the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme since 2000 as per the Guidelines of Government of India. During 2015-2016, 10.14 lakh farmers were enrolled under this scheme. As per the Guidelines, Government of Tamil Nadu has already paid the State share of premium subsidy of Rs.51 crore and the share of compensation of Rs.168.66 crore to the Agricultural Insurance Company of India Limited. It is informed that Government of India has not released its equivalent share of Rs.168.66 crore till date. Due to this, affected insured farmers of Tamil Nadu are yet to fully receive the compensation for the crop loss of 2015-2016.

Hence, I request the Government of India to release its compensation share of Rs.168.66 crore to facilitate the Agricultural Insurance Company of India Limited to fully disburse the claims to the aggrieved farmers of Tamil Nadu at the earliest.

ii) PRADHAN MANTRI FASAL BIMA YOJANA 2016-2017

Pradhan Mantri Fasal BimaYojana is being implemented by Government of Tamil Nadu since Kharif 2016. The massive efforts taken by the State Government in creating awareness among the farmers has led to a massive enrolment of farmers under this scheme with 15.199 lakh farmers enrolled covering an area of 12.564 lakh hectare, which is more than 41% of the Gross Cropped Area of Agriculture and Horticulture crops during Rabi 2016-2017.

Crop Cutting Experiments in all the insured units were conducted in time with prior intimation to the concerned insurance companies to co-witness the same. Tamil Nadu stands first in uploading the Crop Cutting Experiments details in the GoI portal through mobile phone technology as emphasized by Government of India in the Operational Guidelines of Pradhan Mantri Fasal BimaYojana.

The State share of premium subsidy for Rabi 2016-2017 amounting to Rs. 425.788 crore has been released to insurance companies and equivalent amount of Government of India share has also been released to insurance companies.

With regard to claim compensation **for Rabi 2016-2017, so far, only Rs. 20.23 crore has been disbursed to the affected insured farmers.** A sum of Rs. 14.55 crore has been disbursed by Agricultural Insurance Company of India Limited, Rs. 5.37 crore by ICICI Lombard and Rs. 0.31 crore by New India Assurance Company Limited. **Even though the Insurance Companies have to process, approve and make payment of final claims based on the yield data within 3 weeks from receipt of yield data as per Pradhan Mantri Fasal BimaYojana Guidelines para IX.1.12, all the Insurance Companies are found to be slow in disbursement of claim compensation to the affected insured farmers.**

Farmers of Tamil Nadu are already under distress due to the crop loss that was caused by the severe drought that prevailed during 2016-2017. The delay in disbursement of compensation by the insurance companies would further enhance the agony of the aggrieved farmers.

Under the circumstances, it is requested that all the empanelled Insurance Companies implementing Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana in Tamil Nadu may be directed to disburse the claim compensation immediately without any further delay which would otherwise, jeopardize the livelihood of farmers of Tamil Nadu.

4) NATIONAL PROJECT FOR IMPROVEMENT AND REHABILITATION OF IRRIGATION SYSTEMS IN CAUVERY BASIN

Government of India is advocating improvements in the efficiency of water use in the irrigation sector. The National Water Mission has repeatedly requested States to take up such projects and to improve productivity per unit

of water. In this direction the Government of Tamil Nadu has proposed to take up a massive project for 'Improving and Rehabilitating the Irrigation Systems in the Cauvery Basin' at a cost of Rs.14,500 crore.

The project was accepted in principle by the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India. Under this project about 6.5 lakh hectares would be benefited. This project will be of great benefit to the farmers of the Cauvery Delta who frequently face poor irrigation water supply, which affects not only their livelihood but also the food security of the State. This project satisfies all the criteria stipulated for a National Project. I, therefore, request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to declare the 'Improvements and Rehabilitation of Irrigation system in Cauvery Basin' a National Project and instruct the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation to accord the necessary techno-economic and investment clearances at the earliest.

5) CONSTRUCTION OF DAMS / CHECK DAMS ACROSS BHAVANI RIVER BY KERALA

Government of Kerala has taken up the construction of dams and check dams across the river Bhavani and its tributaries without obtaining the concurrence of the lower riparian State, Tamil Nadu. Kerala has also not furnished the details of the projects taken up, either to Government of India or to Tamil Nadu. A mere statement that it is taking up the projects within its allocated share of Cauvery water, without furnishing the project details is not proper. It is understood that the construction of dams and check dams would obstruct the flow which would otherwise be utilized for drinking purposes by the people of Tamil Nadu and also affect the local ecology and environment. I, therefore, request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to advise the Government of Kerala to furnish all the details in respect of the projects that it has already constructed or are under construction or are proposed to be constructed. Further, Government of Kerala should be advised not to go ahead with any construction activities until the Cauvery Management Board is formed and becomes functional.

6) INTER-LINKING OF PENINSULAR RIVERS: PAMBA - ACHANKOVIL – VAIPPAR LINK

Under the Peninsular Rivers Development Component of the Inter Linking of Rivers, our revered leader, the late Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma has repeatedly urged the Government of India to implement the interlinking of the Mahanadhi-Godavari-Krishna-Pennar-Palar-Cauvery-Vaigai-Gundar River and also to divert the surplus waters of the west flowing Pamba and Achankovil Rivers to Vaippar in Tamil Nadu. I also reiterated this request in the Memorandum presented to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 27.02.2017. The National Water Development Agency (NWDA) formulated the Pamba – Achankoil – Vaippar Link Project in 1995, which envisages diversion of 22 TMC ft., that is only 20 per cent of the surplus run-off waters of the Pamba and Achankoil rivers of Kerala, to irrigate an ayacut of 91,400 hectares of dry land in Tamil Nadu. The project will also help to generate 500 MW of hydel power for Kerala.

The State of Kerala, which co-operated with the preparation of the Feasibility Report for the scheme by National Water Development Agency (NWDA), is now reluctant to give its concurrence to prepare the Detailed Project Report (DPR), although the project is mutually beneficial to both the States. I, therefore, request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to advise the Government of Kerala to accord its concurrence in the National interest.

7) CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR KUDIMARAMATH

Due to the severe drought situation in Tamil Nadu, all water bodies and tanks are dry and are having very limited water storage. To handle the drought situation and safeguard the agricultural activities in future in the State, the Government is reviving the Kudimaramath Scheme, an age old practice of people's participation in management of water resources, so as to increase the capacity of traditional water bodies by desilting, strengthening of bund, repairs of sluices and other masonry structures, etc. This will go a long way in drought proofing the State, therefore, the Government of India may extend an assistance of Rs.500 crore to supplement State Government funding of Rs. 300 crore in 2017-2018, which would help restore more traditional water bodies in Tamil Nadu.

8) RELEASE OF PENDING GRANTS TO TAMIL NADU

The Government of India has reduced its share significantly in the Centrally Sponsored Schemes after the implementation of the Fourteenth Finance Commission's recommendations which has resulted in additional financial burden to the States, especially Tamil Nadu. Most of the States that have got the additional fiscal space, due to the Fourteenth Finance Commission's recommendations are in a comfortable position to bear this extra burden. But Tamil Nadu, not being a beneficiary of any additional resource devolution, is now forced to meet this additional expenditure from its own limited resources.

In this situation, I urge you to kindly consider to provide an annual special grant of Rs.2,000 crore for the remaining four years of the 14th Finance Commission award period to overcome this resources shortage to some extent, which is caused by disturbed resource sharing formulae of the 14th Finance Commission.

Further, I invite your kind attention to my previous letter wherein we had brought to your notice that a total amount of Rs.17,333.28 crore is pending with the Government of India for release to Tamil Nadu from various Union Ministries. Even after the issue has been brought to your notice, there had been little forward movement. As a result a total amount of Rs.16,959.04 crore is still pending to be released from various Ministries to Government of Tamil Nadu.

As we have already stated, these pending releases are for expenditure incurred towards the implementation of various Centrally Sponsored Schemes and arrears of other dues. The Government of Tamil Nadu has gone ahead with the implementation of the Centrally Sponsored Schemes based on indicated outlays and approved action plans, to later find that adequate funds have not been made available in the Central Budget and the counterpart Central

share has not been released. This has placed an immense additional stress on the State's finances resulting in a huge revenue deficit. I enclose a list of such pending items (Annexure) and request you to kindly issue suitable direction to the Departments concerned for the early release of the amount due to the State.

I would like to highlight here that the largest amounts pending are in important and sensitive programmes. About Rs.1546.88 crore towards disbursement of Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes for Scheduled Caste students, Rs.1312.10 crore towards implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abiyan (SSA) intended for primary education and Rs.1,588.11 crore towards Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) intended to promote secondary education. The long pending arrears have impacted the successful implementation of the schemes. Similarly, the reimbursement of Rs.239.91 crore under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act is being denied by the Government of India, though under the Act the Government of India is committed to reimburse the amount.

Tamil Nadu is facing a severe drought situation and the rural poor are completely dependent on MGNREGS for their livelihood. I am duty bound to bring to your notice that about Rs.1,285.49 crore is pending to be released towards the material component of the MGNREGS. I request you to kindly arrange to release this amount immediately for the benefit of the rural people of Tamil Nadu.

We were informed by the concerned Ministries that these amounts are pending release for want of adequate budget allocation. With the start of the new financial year, I request you to instruct your Ministries to give due priority to Tamil Nadu in releasing these pending arrear dues to the State. We were informed that, a 35% hike has been given in the Union Budget 2017-2018 for Scheduled Caste Welfare Programmes. Therefore, I request you to instruct the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to give due priority to Tamil Nadu in releasing pending arrear dues for Post Matric Scholarship Schemes. Early release of these funds will ease the fiscal stress the State is facing and enable the Government of Tamil Nadu to continue with the effective implementation of a range of programmes. I have enclosed a revised list of pending items amounting to Rs.16,959.04 crore (Annexure) and request you to kindly arrange for an early release of a major portion of the amount.

9) RELEASE OF BOATS BELONGING TO INDIAN FISHERMEN BY SRI LANKA

Since May, 2014, there have been 109 incidents in which 1,257 Indian fishermen from Tamil Nadu were apprehended and 218 fishing boats were captured by the Sri Lankan Navy. Our revered leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had written to you repeatedly urging that such attacks on and abduction of innocent Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy have to be treated with utmost seriousness and cannot be tolerated.

Our fishermen, in an accommodative frame of mind have been coming forward to hold talks with the fishermen of Sri Lanka in the recent years. Four rounds of talks have so far been held and facilitated by the Government of Tamil Nadu on 27.01.2014 in Chennai, on

12.05.2014 in Colombo, on 24.03.2015 in Chennai and in New Delhi on 02.11.2016 again. The incidents of attacks on and arrests of our fishermen have, however, continued unabated.

As on date, there are 11 fishermen and 135 boats along with fishing gear in Sri Lankan custody. I request the Government of India to take urgent action through diplomatic channels to secure the release of the fishermen and all the boats at the earliest. Further, the Government of India must take **all efforts to protect the traditional fishing rights of the Indian fishermen from Tamil Nadu in the Palk Bay area and ensure their safety and security by restraining the Sri Lankan Navy from harassing them.**

News in Picture

School students from Erode District who were winners in the swimming events in last year's competitions – Chief Minister Cup, Bharathiyar Day Sports event and South Zone Sports Competitions and would be participants in the State Sub Junior Swimming Championship competition to be held in Chennai between June 4 and 6, - Fardheen Khan, Farees Khan, Sudhikshin, Srivarshan, Sengottayan and Narmadha - met the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami at the Secretariat on 16.05.2017 and received his blessings. Thiru. K.A. Sengottaiyan, Hon'ble Minister for School Education, Sports and Youth Welfare was present.

Cell phones registration a must to avail e-service centre facilities

The Tamil Nadu Government has made registration of cell phones compulsory in the Government e-service centres from 02.05.2017 by the public who approach the centres for availing themselves of the facilities provided.

At present over 10,000 e-service centres are functioning all over Tamil Nadu through the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation, Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Societies and Village Poverty Eradication Groups under the supervision of the Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency (TNeGA). The purpose of these centres is to provide Government services expeditely to the general public in a transparent manner near their homes.

At present through these centres issue Income Certificate, Community Certificate, Nativity Certificate, Certificate for women deserted by their husbands, First Generation Graduate Certificate, assistance under the Chief Minister's Female Protection Scheme, Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Ninaivu Marriage Assistance, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Inter-Caste Marriage Assistance, E.V.R. Maniammaiyar Ninaivu Marriage Assistance for female children of Widows, and Annai Theresa Ninaivu Marriage Assistance for orphan girl child. Besides, these centres are also accepting Electricity Charges on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board, Property Tax on behalf of the Chennai Greater Corporation, and Water and Sewerage Tax on behalf of the Chennai Metro Water and Sewerage Corporation.

The State Government has been taking numerous steps to ensure quick and efficient service to the general public. In this connection, the Government has made registration of Cell phones compulsory in these centres from 02.05.2017. Member of the general public who approach the e-Service Centres for availing themselves of any of the facilities provided by the centres have to register their cell phones with the computer operator of the centre concerned. After the registration, details such as application number of the service sought by the applicant and the service charge for the same will be sent by SMS to the registered cell phones. To know the status of their application, any applicant can send an SMS to 15,5250 and get the details. Apart from this, general public can get their doubts clarified and get more details by contacting the toll-free telephone number (1800 425 1333).

Once the application is cleared and the certificate is ready, an SMS will be sent to the registered cell number. Through SMS and the web, the applicants can view their certificates.

Members of the public are requested to take their cell phones for registration whenever they approach the Centres for availing themselves of the e-service centre facilities. ■

Memorandum to Urban Growth Minister on Smart City, Housing, Metro Rail

Memorandum presented to **Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu,**
Union Minister for Urban Development, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation,
Information & Broadcasting by **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami**,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 14.05.2017

1. Urban Development Related Issues

(a) Smart City Mission

(i) Inclusion of Pan City Projects

The Smart City Mission guidelines focus on Area Based Development (ABD) which envisages providing infrastructure facilities in a selected part of the city, with the rest of the city is to be covered in subsequent phases. This implies that most of the facilities will be created in the area selected for ABD, whereas rest of the city would be deprived of such facilities, thereby creating city level imbalances. Even though under the AMRUT programme infrastructure facilities can be provided for the whole city, the allocation under AMRUT is considerably lower, especially for bigger cities.

Hence, in the Smart City Mission guidelines, flexibility may be provided to the Smart City SPV to implement basic infrastructure projects on a Pancity basis as well, based on the needs and aspirations of the city dwellers.

(ii) Approval of Smart City Proposals of remaining Cities in Tamil Nadu

Government of India has allocated 12 Smart Cities to Tamil Nadu. All the 12 Municipal Corporations in Tamil Nadu are covered under the Smart Cities Mission based on the "Intra-State Competition". All 12 Municipal Corporations have submitted the Smart Cities Proposals to Government of India. In the first round (January, 2016), Greater Chennai and Coimbatore Corporations were approved and in the second round (September, 2016), Madurai, Salem, Thanjavur and Vellore Corporations have been sanctioned. As suggested by Government of India, the remaining 6 Cities namely Tiruchirappalli, Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Erode, Tiruppur and Dindigul have improved their "Smart Cities Proposals" for the third round competition and submitted them on 31st March, 2017. I request the Ministry of Urban Development **to approve the remaining 6 Smart City proposals early.**

(b) Creating a separate Sub Mission for Small and Medium Towns

Tamil Nadu has 12 corporations, 124 Municipalities, 528 Town Panchayats and 433 other census towns accommodating 48% of its total population. However, only 28 ULBs are covered under the Smart City Mission and AMRUT, covering less than half of the total urban population of Tamil Nadu. The remaining urban population in Tamil Nadu lives in the remaining 636 statutory cities and towns and 433 census towns. These small towns have extremely limited resources to effectively plan and implement initiatives to address their problems and overcome the serious deficiencies they face in infrastructure and basic amenities. Hence, similar to the schemes which were earlier implemented in small and medium towns like the Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) and Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme in Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT), **a dedicated Mission or programme should be launched**

by the Ministry of Urban Development, to develop small and medium Towns in order to address the issue of outward migration.

(c) Release of Pending Grants

Tamil Nadu is the forerunner in implementing various Government of India programmes like JnNURM-UIG, UIDSSMT, BSUP and IHSDP. In respect of JnNURM–UIG and UIDSSMT transition Phase projects, the State Government has already forwarded the Utilization Certificates to Government of India in order to claim an amount of Rs. 44.97 crore (JnNURM–UIG – 10 Works – Rs.25.05 crore and UIDSSMT – 2 Works – Rs.19.92 crore. **Hence, Government of India may consider releasing the installments due at the earliest.**

(d) Declaring More Cities Open Defecation Free (ODF) under Swachh Bharat Mission

Elimination of open defecation and eradication of manual scavenging is the objective of Swachh Bharat Mission. In order to declare a city Open Defecation Free (ODF), the first step is for the Cities/ Towns to declare themselves as ODF, followed by a declaration by the Government of India. The Government of India have already declared 2 more Municipal Corporations (Tiruchirappalli and Coimbatore) and 23 Town Panchayats as Open Defecation Free Cities/ towns in Tamil Nadu. In addition, 2 Municipal Corporations, 6 Municipalities and 50 Town Panchayats have already submitted their proposals to Government of India seeking declaration as ODF Cities/ Towns.

The Government of India is requested to declare these Cities/ Towns as ODF at the earliest.

(e) Approval for Desalination Plants for Chennai:-

The Government of Tamil Nadu have already established two 100 MLD desalination plants at Minjur and Nemmeli in Chennai to augment city water supply. Additionally, 150 MLD capacity desalination plant is proposed to be implemented with assistance from KfW. In order to meet the demands created due to the expansion of the city, Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB) and Government of Tamil Nadu have prepared a Detailed Project Report for a 400 MLD Desalination Project costing Rs. 5,312 crore which has been sent to JICA through the Ministry of Urban Development and Department of Economic Affairs, Government of India for finalization of financial assistance. **Government of India may take necessary steps to secure project funding from JICA.**

2. Housing Related Issues

(a) Housing for All

(i) Special package under PMAY-HFA (Urban) to construct multi storeyed flats in Chennai city to rehabilitate slum dwellers on 50:50 sharing basis between GoI and Tamil Nadu Government

Tamil Nadu is the fastest urbanizing State in the country with nearly 50% of its people

already living in urban areas. Chennai City which is one of the oldest Metro cities of India has seen a surge in population, leading to the growth of slums. These slums have grown along the major water ways of the City namely the Adyar, Cooum, Buckingham Canal and Otteri Nullah.Due to encroachments on these water bodies, the city faces recurrent problems of floods, health hazards and inhuman conditions of living.

In the aftermath of the unprecedented flood of December 2015, our Revered leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had requested the Hon'ble Prime Minister to grant a special package for Chennai City to construct 50,000 houses to rehabilitate the people living along water fronts in Chennai City with 100 per cent assistance from Central Government at the rate of Rs.10 lakh per house amounting to Rs.5,000 crore. This proposal is yet to be approved.

As per the **demand survey** conducted under PMAY-HFA by the Government of Tamil Nadu, the **demand for housing** for the urban poor in **Chennai** has been arrived at **2,00,000 families,** majority of whom are living along the course of waterways. To restore the encroached water bodies and improve the water front to mitigate future natural calamities, improve health and hygiene and make Chennai City more green and aesthetic, I request that a special package may be formulated within PMAY-HFA (Urban) on a 50-50 sharing pattern for the construction of 1,00,000 multi-storeyed flats including related infrastructure, to house the houseless and people living in slums within the City over a period of four years at a total cost of Rs.10,000 crore.

(ii) Increasing the Government of India subsidy under Housing for All Affordable Housing in Partnership Projects

The construction of tenements by Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board usually

costs at least Rs. 9 to Rs. 10 lakh excluding the cost of land. Hence the Government of Tamil Nadu has to bear a huge subsidy burden towards the construction of these tenements, which is 3 to 4 times the subsidy of Rs.1.50 lakh provided by Government of India. I request the Government of India to enhance the subsidy for construction of multi-storied tenements to rehabilitate slum dwellers to reduce the subsidy burden of the State. Further, the Government of India subsidy component under "Housing for All" projects must be indexed for inflation and increased every year to meet increase in cost of materials and construction.

(iii) Provision of cost of Infrastructure Development

Earlier, Government of India scheme guidelines also provided for the cost of infrastructure development under slum rehabilitation programmes, in addition to the cost of construction of houses. However, under HFA, the project cost for assistance is estimated without any provision for infrastructure development. It is expected that the cost of infrastructure would be met through funds provided under AMRUT. However, at present AMRUT is being implemented only in 28 cities/towns in Tamil Nadu, while construction of houses under HFA has been taken up in all the 664 statutory towns. Hence, I request you to provide grants for developing infrastructure in housing projects under HFA in non- AMRUT cities or alternatively expand AMRUT to cover all statutory and Census towns.

(iv) Extending HFA (Urban) to all Local Planning Areas

Tamil Nadu is a rapidly urbanizing State. Most of the rapid growth occurs in Village Panchayat areas which surround Towns and Cities. In order to ensure that the HFA (Urban)

Mission comprehensively addresses the issue of urban housing, it is requested that the HFA (Urban)Mission may be expanded to cover all local bodies falling under planned areas of various Local Planning Areas in Tamil Nadu. Further, at present relocation of families from urban areas to nearby rural areas is permitted under HFA (Urban). A number of such projects are being implemented in villages adjoining cities. However, none of the homeless people living in such villages are eligible to be allotted houses in such projects. The guidelines may be modified to permit up to 25 per cent of the allottees to be houseless persons from the local area in which such relocation projects are taken up, even if it is a rural area.

(v) Including Tamil Nadu Co-operative Federation as an Implementing Agency under Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme component of Housing for All

The Government of Tamil Nadu has already requested the Ministry of Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation to include the Tamil Nadu Co-operative Housing Federation Limited as an Implementing Agency for the Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) component under the Housing for All Mission. It is learnt that as per extant guidelines, co-operative institutions have not been included in the list of institutions eligible to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with National Housing Bank and HUDCO to implement the CLSS component of Housing for All. The Tamil Nadu Co-operative Housing Federation along with its affiliated societies has vast reach amongst the urban poor and has assisted more than 12 lakh members in the State for construction of houses. Inclusion of the Federation in the list of implementing agencies would enable Tamil Nadu to more

effectively implement the CLSS component of Housing for All.

(vi) Provision for Administrative Cost

As the size of the programme under HFA is large requiring large administrative and human resource costs. Hence, Government of India may consider providing administrative support to the nodal agencies at 5 per cent of the project cost.

(b) Relaxation of CRZ Rules – for Slum Redevelopment and Rehabilitation:

Chennai is a coastal city. There is a huge demand for provision of houses for fishermen. In order **to redevelop the existing slum tenements and utilize the lands in CRZ** areas optimally, Government of India is requested to amend CRZ Rules to permit Government of Tamil Nadu to redevelop existing slum tenements lying in CRZ areas (including CRZ I) by utilizing the prevailing FSI / FAR prescribed in the existing rules and regulations under Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act.

(c) Increase size of Affordable Housing Units eligible for Service Tax Exemption from 30 Sq.Mt. to 60 Sq.Mt. in Metropolitan areas:

Many initiatives to promote housing were announced in the Union Budget 2017-2018 including the grant of infrastructure status to affordable housing projects and for service tax exemption for such projects having unit sizes upto 30 Sq.Mt. of built-up-area in four Metropolitan cities and 60 Sq.Mt. in other cities. I reiterate the request that the unit size in Metropolitan areas may also be increased upto 60 Sq.Mt. for eligibility for Service tax exemption. The Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board constructs units having a minimum area of 400 sq.ft. i.e., 40 Sq.mt. in order to ensure better living conditions.

3. Chennai Metro Rail - Pending Project and Policy Issues:

The Chennai Metro Rail Limited, a joint venture of Government of India and Government of Tamil Nadu requires support on certain key policy issues from the Government of India:

(a) Chennai Metro Rail Project Phase II: -

Metropolitan Chennai has been growing rapidly and traffic volumes have increased greatly. It was the goal of our Revered Leader the late Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Puratchi Thalaivi Amma to promote public transport of various forms including metro rail to ensure that the share of public transportation in Chennai city is substantially increased.

Phase I of the Chennai Metro Rail Project which is currently under implementation, will cover a total length of 45 km. The Phase I extension from Washermenpet to Tiruvotriyur/ WIMCO Nagar covering a further 9.051 Kms at the cost of Rs.3,770 crore has been approved by the Government of India and the work was also inaugurated by our Revered Leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

There is a need to substantially expand the metro rail network in the city of Chennai.

A detailed feasibility report for Phase-II of the Chennai Metro Rail Project along three corridors has been approved by the Government of Tamil Nadu, and the project was included in the rolling plan of Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) for funding Our Revered Leader the late Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had requested the Hon'ble Prime Minister for Government of India's support for the proposed Phase II of the Chennai Metro Rail Project.

The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Chennai Metro Rail Project, Phase II to construct 3 more corridors of a total length of 107.5 km at a total completion cost of Rs.85,047 crore has been approved by the Government of Tamil Nadu and sent to the Government of India for approval. As the inauguration of passenger services on the second elevated section from the Airport to Little Mount was the last public engagement in which our Revered Leader the late Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had participated in on September 21, 2016, it would be most fitting if Phase II of the Chennai Metro Rail Project is given early approval by the Government of India and posed to JICA for funding at the earliest.

(b) Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding: -

The Chennai Metro Rail Project is being implemented on a joint ownership basis between the Government of India and Government of Tamil Nadu. In the Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was entered into between Government of India, Government of Tamil Nadu and Chennai Metro Rail Limited, for implementing the project, the then UPA Government and the then DMK led State Government had included certain clauses which are not in the interest of the State Government and of the Project. These clauses do not provide for an equitable sharing of risks and costs. Our Revered Leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had sought amendments to certain clauses of the MoU, in particular, treating the land cost as the equity contribution of the Central or State Government who are transferring the land; sharing of any escalation in project cost and foreign exchange fluctuation beyond the approved project completion period also equally by the two Governments; and sharing of both operational losses and profits between the Government of India and the State Government.

In response to the Memorandum submitted by our Revered Leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma on 14th June, 2016, the Ministry of Urban Development has indicated that the issue need not be pursued further as 90 percent of project work has been completed. However, the Ministry of Urban Development has persisted with the same clauses and made them even more stringent in the draft MoU they have shared for the Chennai Metro Rail Phase I Extension. I have also written to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on this issue on 31st March 2017. I earnestly request you to consider this issue with an open mind and in the spirit of

co-operative federalism so that the legitimate concerns of the State Government regarding the MoU are adequately addressed. I also request that these views of the Government of Tamil Nadu should be considered and incorporated in the Metro Rail Policy of the Government of India currently under finalization.

(c) Railway lands taken by Chennai Metro Rail Limited on lease basis:

Chennai Metro Rail Limited has taken Railway lands on long lease basis for the implementation of the Chennai Metro Rail Project on payment of 99 per cent of the market value for a period of 35 years, extendable for another 35 years. In spite of the payment of 99 per cent of the land value, the surface rights have been retained by Railways which is unfair.

A policy view has to be taken by Government of India, to transfer Railway lands to Metro Rail Project on permanent basis on collection of 100 per cent of the land value as is being done in respect of lands transferred from other Central Government Departments / Agencies with full rights or in case, full rights cannot be given for justifiable reasons by Railways, then only nominal/token amount shall be charged for restricted rights. Further no collection of charges should be made for underground tunneling work done by Metro Rail Administration below the Railway land. A nominal fee as track rent may be charged on crossing of Railway tracks alone.

When the issue was taken up at Railway Board level, they have not considered it favourably. However, the Ministry of Urban Development has taken up the issue at the meeting of Committee of Secretaries and the issue is still unresolved. This issue is also creating confusion in interpretation of guidelines and fixing of charges. It is feared that this unresolved issue may result in adverse impact on the progress of the project.

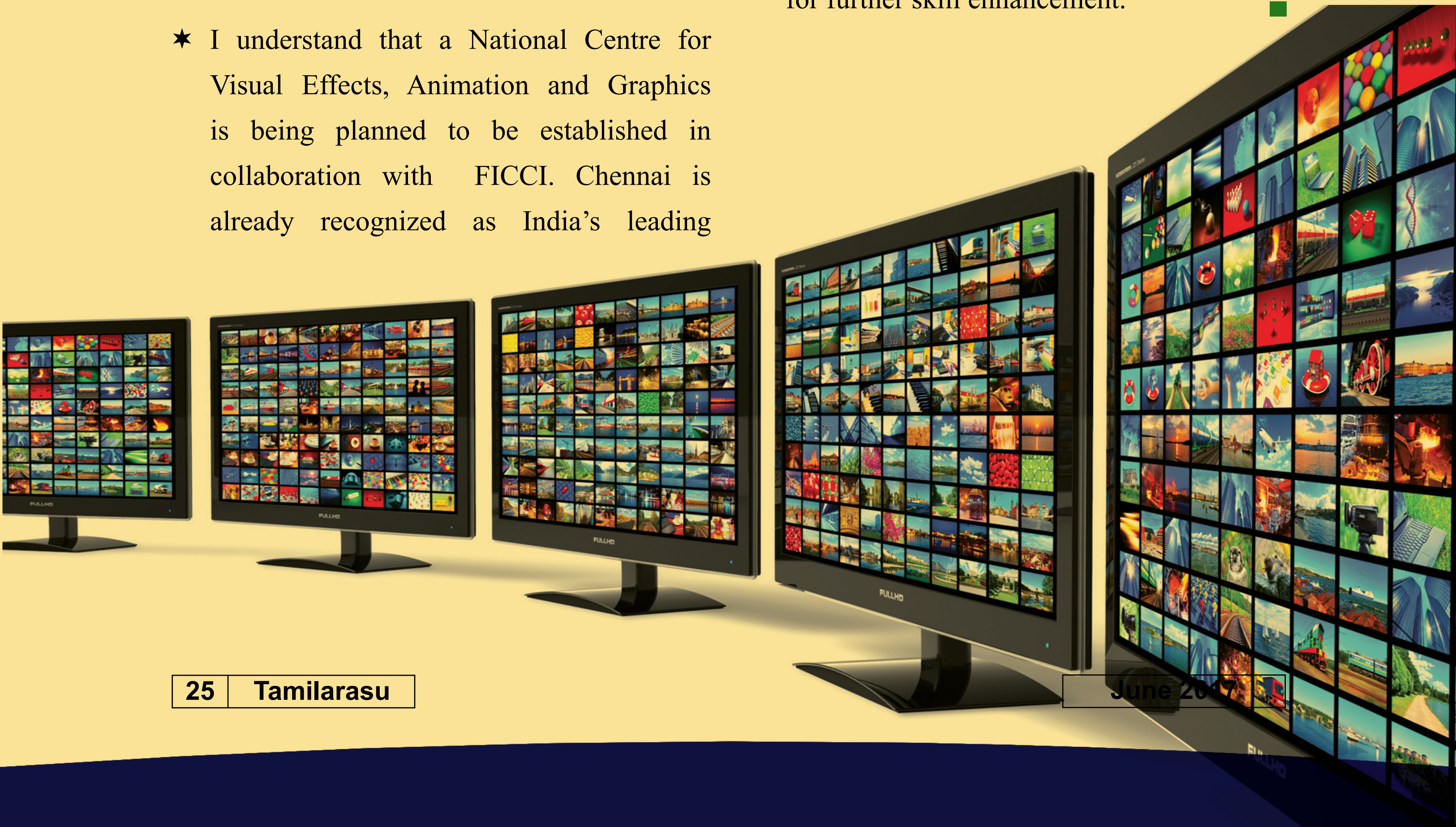
Ideally, now that the Railway Budget has been merged with the General Budget, Railway land and land belonging to all Central Government Ministries and agencies should be transferred to Metro Rail projects as Government of India's equity, to match a similar transfer of State Government land. Such a provision may also be incorporated in the Metro Rail Policy.

4. Information and Broadcasting:

I thank the Hon'ble Minister for Urban Development, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, and Information and Broadcasting for having acceded to the long pending request of the Government of Tamil Nadu, articulated by our Revered Leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, and granted the Digital Addressable System (DAS) License for the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation (TACTV). This will greatly benefit common people in the State. TACTV is in the process of ensuring that they fulfil all the conditions contained in the license and speedily extend digital services throughout Tamil Nadu.

On behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu, I have a few specific requests which can benefit the people of the State:

- FM Stations from All India Radio may be opened in at least 10 District Head quarters in Tamil Nadu so as to expand outreach.
- Journalism is an expanding sector for employment. There are few institutions which provide quality education and training for this profession. Hence, I request that a Regional Centre of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication may be opened in Tamil Nadu, if need be in collaboration with an existing State University to minimize start up time and creation of necessary infrastructure.
- Similarly, a Regional Centre of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune can be opened in collaboration with one of the State Universities in Tamil Nadu.
- I understand that a National Centre for Visual Effects, Animation and Graphics is being planned to be established in collaboration with FICCI. Chennai is already recognized as India's leading audio and video production centre with several post production processing activities like digital recording, mastering, dubbing and animation being undertaken for several films made all over India. Recognizing this potential, our Revered Leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had in the Vision Tamil Nadu 2023, envisaged a Special Development Centre for Media and Entertainment in Chennai, to deliver such services globally. Hence, it would be fitting to locate the National Centre for Visual Effects, Animation and Graphics at Chennai.
- The film industry employs a large number of technicians and other skilled workers. Under the Skill India Mission, film workers of various trades should be given more training and certification, both through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and for further skill enhancement.



Chief Minister seeks Metro Rail extension to 3 more corridors

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami after inaugurating the Metro Rail service between Tirumangalam and Nehru Park on 14.05.2017 (*English Translation*)

I begin my address by offering my prayers to my deity Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Hon'ble Union Minister for Urban Development, Housing, Urban Poverty Eradication and Information and Broadcasting Thiru. Venkaiah Naidu,

Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Surface Transport, Highways, and Shipping Thiru. Pon Radhakrishnan,

Hon'ble Tamil Nadu Minister for Fisheries, Finance, Personnel and Administrative Reforms Thiru. D.Jayakumar,

Hon'ble Tamil Nadu Minister for Industries Thiru. M.C.Sampath,

Hon'ble Ministers, Members of Parliament and Legislative Assembly,

State President of the BJP Dr. Tamilisai Sounderarajan, Tamil Nadu Textbook Society Chairperson, Secretary to Government of

India, Ministry of Urban Development Thiru. Rajiv Gauba I.A.S, Chief Secretary of the Tamil Nadu Government Dr.Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S, High officials of the Central Government, Mr.Kenko Sone, Minister in Japan Embassy at New Delhi, Mr.Seji Baba, Consul General of Japan in Chennai, Mr.Takema Sakamoto, Chief Representative, JICA at New Delhi, Thiru. S.Krishnan I.A.S, Principal Secretary for Planning, Development and Special Programme Implementation Department, who welcomed the gathering, Executive Director of the Chennai Metro Rail Thiru. Pankaj Kumar Bansal, who is to propose the vote of thanks, Government servants and my dear people, first of all let me offer my warm welcome to you all.

I am really happy that the Union Minister for Urban Development, Housing, Urban Poverty Alleviation and Information and Broadcasting Thiru. Venkaiah Naidu who has got an interest in the welfare of Tamils and Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's affection, is participating in the function.

Due to sustained efforts of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting sanctioned digital license to the Tamil Nadu Cable TV Corporation and Thiru. Venkaiah Naidu was supportive of the Tamil Nadu Government in getting the license for which I thank the Hon'ble Union Minister Thiru. Venkaiah Naidu on behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu.

I am proud to associate with the Hon'ble Union Minister in participating in the inauguration of Chennai Metro Rail service between Koyambedu and Nehru Park and of seven underground stations today.

Due to rapid growth in population and the number of vehicles in the City, traffic congestion has been on the rise. One solution for relieving the congestion is the metro rail service, which is being implemented jointly by the Central and the State Governments with loan assistance from the Japan International Co-operation Agency.

The seed for the Metro Rail Scheme was planted by the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma who ordered a feasibility study of the Chennai Metro Rail Scheme in 2003 when Hon'ble Amma was the Chief Minister of the State. Based on the study, two corridors were selected one from Washermenpet to Chennai Airport, a distance of 23 km and the other a 22 km stretch from Chennai Central to St. Thomas Mount.

On 29.06.2015, the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma inaugurated the metro rail

service from Koyambedu to Alandur, a distance of 10.15 km on the elevated stretch. The Hon'ble Amma also declared open workshop in Koyambedu, and railway stations in CMBT, Arumbakkam, Vadapalani, Ekattuthangal and Alandur.

The Hon'ble Amma also laid the foundation stone for the extension of first phase from Washermenpet to Tiruvottiyur-Wimco Nagar on 23.07.2016 and thanked the Hon'ble Union Minister Thiru. Venkaiah Naidu for getting the Central Government's approval for the 9.05 km extension of the first phase at a cost of Rs. 3,770 crore. Moreover, the Hon'ble Central Minister was responsible in getting the Rs. 93 crore capital participation for the scheme for which I once again thank the Hon'ble Central Minister.

On 21.09.2016, the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma inaugurated passenger service on the 8.6 km elevated stretch between Chennai Airport and Chinnamalai and the 1.2 km stretch from Alandur to St.Thomas Mount and also declared open Chennai Airport, Meenambakkam, Nanganallur Road, Guindy, Chinnamalai and St.Thomas Mount Stations.

During the period 2006-2011, when the then DMK was in power in the State only Rs. 1,143 crore was spent for the Rs. 14,600 crore project. From June 2011 to April 2017 when the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma was in power in the State, Rs.13,787 crore was spent. Every year, the State Government, guided by the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has been allotting sufficient funds for the project and taking steps for timely completion of the project.

Till 2011, during the then DMK Government period only 3 per cent of the project had been completed. Thanks for the steps taken by the Puratchi Thalaivi Amma Government, works relating to elevated stretches, Metro Railway Stations and workshops were completed.

Today, the first phase of the underground 7.4 km stretch between Koyambedu and Nehru Park has been thrown open for passenger service.

As the aim of the Metro Rail Service is to provide quick, comfortable and modern transport service air-condition facilities, automatic safety, special seating facility for differently-abled citizens, display of information regarding arrival of stations, emergency exits, CCTV cameras have been provided in all railway stations and coaches.

The remaining work on the first phase of underground stretch from Nehru Park to Central Railway station has been going on in full swing. Of the 35.4 km underground stretch, work on the 34.5 km has been completed. The remaining portion will be completed before the end of the year and the Chinnamalai-Washermenpet underground stretch will be completed by the middle of 2018.

In the first phase of the Metro Rail project, 54 kms stretch had been planned and the same is being implemented. Taking into consideration the rapid growth of Chennai Metropolitan area, the State Government guided by the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma has decided to extend the metro services in three more corridors for which administrative sanction has been obtained to prepare draft feasibility report and detailed project report. Based on this approval, RITES has submitted the report. The report recommended three more corridors viz., Madhavaram to Siruseri, CMBT to Light House and Madhavaram to Sholinganallur.

The State Government accepted the report and agreed to implement in principle the extension of the project in three more corridors at a cost of Rs. 85,047 crore. The project report has been sent to Union Urban Development Ministry for the Central Government's approval and financial assistance and to get loan assistance from the Japan International Co-operation Agency. Meanwhile the project has been included in the JICA's 2016-2017 Revolving scheme. I request the Hon'ble Union Minister for Urban Development to give Centre's sanction for the extension of the project.

In the year 2011, an MoU was signed between the Central and the State Governments when the DMK was in power in the State. In the MoU many clauses were against the interest of the State Government. As its impact is being felt even after the implementation of the project, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had submitted a Memorandum demanding a change in certain clauses of the MoU. I have also mentioned this in my Memorandum to the Hon'ble Prime Minister. I request the Hon'ble Union Minister to take necessary steps to amend the clauses in the MoU so that they do not affect the interests of the State Government.

It has also been planned to integrate the metro railways with the suburban rail, mofussil and metro bus services in future. Following this, the share of public transport in the Chennai Metropolitan is likely to increase substantially. Due to planned schemes of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, Chennai Metropolis will become a modern city that will attract international tourists.

On this happy occasion I thank the employees and workers who worked day and night for the completion of the project and also those who had made excellent arrangement for the function.

Nandri ! Vanakkam ! ■

Chief Minister : I follow Amma's guiding principles and take decisions immediately

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** in Madurai on 05.05.2017 after inaugurating Government schemes (*English Translation*)

Madam Chief Secretary who welcomed the gathering, Hon'ble Minister for Forests Thiru. Dindigul C.Sreenivasan, Hon'ble Minister for Municipal Administration & Rural Development, Implementation of Special Programme Thiru. S.P.Velumani, Hon'ble Minister for Co-operation Thiru. Sellur K. Raju, Hon'ble Minister for Dairy Development Thiru. K.T. Rajenthrabhalaji, Hon'ble Minister for Revenue Thiru. R.B.Udhaya Kumar, Hon'ble Minister for Information & Publicity Thiru.Kadambur Raju, Hon'ble Minister for Adi Dravidar & Tribal Welfare Tmt. V.M. Rajalakshmi, Hon'ble Minister forKhadi& Village Industries Thiru.G.Baskaran, Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology Dr. M. Manikandan, Hon'ble Minister for Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Thiru. Sevoor S.Ramachandran, Madurai North MLA Thiru. V.V.Rajan Chellappa, Members of Parliament, and Legislative Assembly, Government Secretaries, Police officials, former Members of Parliament and Legislative Assembly, former members of local body units, District office-bearers of the party, Press and media friends, and District Collector, I extend my welcome to one and all on this happy occasion.

I am really happy to meet you all in Madurai, which is one of the oldest cities in the country. Two of the six abodes of Lord Muruga are in Madurai. One is Tiruparankundram and the other is Palamudhircholai. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma was always happy to visit Madurai and Hon'ble Amma used to participate and address gatherings in Madurai and gave much importance to the schemes meant for Madurai. The present Government which functions with the blessings of Hon'ble Amma, is giving the same importance to Madurai.

Madurai has got so many other names such as Kudal, Malligai Nagar and Thunga Nagaram. In many of the Sangam classics, the

beauty of Madurai Town's structure had been described. To know the greatness of Madurai many scholars visited Madurai. Megasthenes, and Kautilya, who visited Madurai in the third century in their travelogues had mentioned about Madurai. I am always happy to visit Madurai, which has found a place in Epics and literature. The reason is that Madurai rejuvenates those who toil, and are truthful and spirited.

Madurai developed Tamil by setting up the Sangam. It contributed to the growth of Tamil by associating with devotional literature (Bhakthi Ilakkiyam). That was why, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. with farsightedness decided to set up the World Tamil Sangam in Madurai. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma said. "Beyond praise and blame, my job is to go on working for the welfare of the people. The development of the Tamil people is my own development and I shall continue to work for them". But those who elevated themselves with the help of Tamil have not done anything for the language. This became evident in their action of putting the World Tamil Sangam, which was announced by Puratchi Thalaivar MGR, in cold storage. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma who considered Tamil and Tamils as her two eyes constructed a huge complex for the Tamil Sangam at a cost of Rs. 37.25 crore in about 14.5 acres. I appeal to people to identify those who really worked for the language by evaluating the services rendered by Puratchi Thalaivar and the Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

On 08.03.2017 I got the opportunity of inaugurating Government schemes for Madurai Zone. Under Puratchi Thalaivar Colony Scheme, 276 multi-storied tenements under the slum clearance board at a cost of Rs. 20.35 crore, a multi-purpose indoor stadium constructed at a cost of Rs. 1.50 crore, and totally 1,641 works costing Rs. 91.51 crore were inaugurated for Madurai District. In Madurai zone, which includes six Districts, namely Madurai, Theni, Dindigul, Sivagangai, Ramanathapuram, and Virudhunagar, 6,874 works costing Rs. 1,004.13 crore were completed and declared open. I am happy to inaugurate more schemes in Madurai District which were completed in a short span of time.

Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had the strong conviction that for the economic development of a State, development of road infrastructure plays a major role among various kinds of infrastructure. Even for human resource development, road infrastructure is vital. It is possible to assess the development of a State by looking at the integrated road development in the State. So, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma always gave importance for improving road infrastructure and over-bridges.

On behalf of Municipal Administration and Water Supplies Department in Chennai Corporation, high level bridges between Arapalayam and Aruldaspuram and from Tirumalaiyar Padithurai to Sellur, totally costing Rs. 30.47 crore are inaugurated. These two bridges will be named after Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. The State Government is also happy to dedicate various schemes worth Rs. 53,33,92,000/- for the benefit of the public.

To reduce traffic congestion in Madurai city, the State Government planned to construct a high-level bridge from Periyar Bus stand to Anaikal. For this, acquisition of land at a cost of Rs. 38 crore is being carried out. Another high-level bridge from Kalavasal Junction at a cost of Rs. 192 core has been planned and the design

for the bridge has been finalized. Similarly, a high-level bridge in Goripalayam Junction near Thevar statue will be constructed at a cost of Rs. 165 crore and steps are being taken for land acquisition. Over-bridge work in Chinthamani Salai will soon commence. An over-bridge near Pandikovil on Madurai-Thondi Road has been finalized and estimate cost is to be finalized. The ring road around Madurai will be converted into four lane road and contract has been finalized for the work. Various schemes are being taken up for Madurai City.

On this happy occasion, I would like to share an information with you. In this male-dominated society, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma fought relentlessly and won. It is these victories that are responsible for giving various welfare schemes for the people of Tamil Nadu.

Like Goddess Meenakshi who resides in the hearts of the people of Madurai, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is adored by them. I assure you that the present State Government will not sway from the path laid by the Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

If anything is to be successfully completed, those who are involved in it should work together. To run the Hon'ble Amma's Government successfully, co-operation of all people is necessary.

In this connection a story comes to my mind.

A hunter who wanted to capture some pigeons which were coming in droves laid a net to trap them. A few pigeons were trapped in the net. When the hunter tried to catch hold of the trapped pigeons, some of the pigeons which were outside the net, with a view to saving the trapped pigeons, also got into the net and all the pigeons together lifted the net and flew to safety. The hunter was disappointed and surprised by the unity of the pigeons. Similarly, we should remain united and support Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's Government to implement welfare works which were dear to Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

I acted as per the guidelines of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma when I was a Minister. Similarly, I serve as the Chief Minister as per the guiding principles of Amma and I work with the single motive of people's welfare. I am participating in various District functions in the State to protect the interests of the people. As I am clearing all the files that are coming to me immediately, the Government machinery is functioning in full steam. On major issues, secretaries concerned and higher officials are consulted and immediate decisions are taken for the welfare of the State.

The Tamil Nadu Government will soon take over all sand quarries in the State. Filling sand in lorries will be done under the supervision of the Government. Similarly, piling up the sand in the stockyard will be done under the supervision of the Government. Through this, the price of sand will be controlled. I appeal to people to extend co-operation for this new move of the Government.

Only if there is sand in rivers and tanks, the groundwater level will improve. I appeal to people as well as those who are in construction industry to make use of M-sand gradually. This will gradually stop the use of sand in two to three years. The ground water level has to be improved. As rainfall is poor in the State, the ground water level can be improved only by preserving the sand. I thank all those who associate with this function.

Nandri, Vanakkam.

Chief Minister opens Ooty flower show with fragrant memories of Amma

Inaugural speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the 121st Ooty flower show on 19.05.2017 (*English Translation*)

I am extremely happy to participate in the inaugural function of the 121st Ooty flower show. First, I pay my obeisance to the deity, Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. I am proud to participate in this function, held with the blessings of Idaya Deivam Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the only heir of Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and world renowned leader who has carved a permanent niche in the hearts of the people.

Hon'ble Co-operation Minister for Thiru. Sellur K. Raju who has graced this function,

Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development Thiru. S.P.Velumani who has offered many excellent ideas in his just concluded speech,

Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture Thiru. R. Doraikkannu who has given excellent view points in his brief speech,

Principal Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Thiru. K.R. Arjun, Rajya Sabha Member, respected Thiru. Gopalakrishnan, MP representing Nilgiris, Thiru. A.K.Selvaraj, Member, Rajya Sabha, Thiru. A. Ramu, MLA, Ooty MLA R. Ganesh, respectful Thiru. Kanakaraj, MLA, respectful sister

Kasthuri Vasu, respectful brother Eswaran, former Minister Thiru. A. Miller, President, Tamil Nadu Milk Producers' Federation, Director, Horticulture, Nilgiris District Collector Dr. P. Shankar, Government officials, print and electronic media friends, respectable elders, Ladies, dear siblings who are blood unto blood of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma,

At the outset I offer my greetings to all of you. Ooty is an excellent tourist centre or world class. I am proud to inaugurate the 121st flower show in the city that gained glory due to the centenary flower show conducted in 1995 on a gigantic scale by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. Hon'ble Amma liked Ooty for its sheer scenic beauty. Hon'ble Amma once spoke at Ooty:"We get rejuvenated when we see the majesty of the mountains and the beauty of the serpentine rivers, and smell the wafting scent of the flowers and eye the rivulets. Our worries fly away". I hope you all experience the same happiness.

I am proud that people of Ooty are as lofty-minded as the peak they habitat, the highest in Tamil Nadu. Ooty shines as a safe and serene tourist spot.

This annual flower show is visited and enjoyed by more than 2 lakh tourists. Nilgiris (has Ooty) which is called the 'queen of hill stations'. But no one had crowned this queen. Only Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, through many developmental schemes, crowned this queen and honoured her.

Ahalya sprang back to life at the touch of Sri Rama's feet. After Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's feet touched the Nilgiris mountain, the highest peak found growth and exuberance. Particularly, it was Hon'ble

TEASERV; whenever tea price plummets, offering a subsidy of Rs.2 per kg and thus encouraging tea plantation industry; Rs.8 crore for upgradation of this world renowned botanical gardens; annexe to the District collectorate at a cost of Rs.27 crore to house the different departments in one place; quarters to employees at a cost of Rs.6.03 crore; setting up of a Tribal Cultural Centre at a cost of Rs.15 crore to honour the six tribal communities – Todar, Irular, Kurumbar, Kothar, Paniyar and Kattunayakar.

Puratchi Thalaivi Amma who gifted to this District a wonderful rose garden with 4,000 varieties, not seen anywhere else in South Asia. I wish to recall Hon'ble Amma's other contributions to this District. They are: Pykara Ultimate Stage Hydro-electric Power Plant; decorative lights and basic facilities like underground drainage and toilets, in Ooty at a cost of Rs.27 crore; Nanjanaadu Tea factory at a cost of Rs.5 crore to upgrade the livelihood of tea farmers; modernization of Government tea factories at a cost of Rs.5.40 crore; Rs. 15 crore financial assistance to Sirumugai Tea Federation; financial assistance of Rs.1.40 crore for import and distribution at subsidized rates of high grade 'carnation mother plants' now grown in Government horticulture farm at Thammanpatti to enable farmers to increase production and achieve economic development; development of Ooty lake at a cost of Rs. 6.89 crore; setting up of a tea park at Doddabetta at a cost of Rs.80 lakh; inauguration of an exclusive computerized auction centre –

The speciality of this flower show is the display of different flowers in 15,000 containers at one place and it is to be appreciated that they are arranged in an attractive way in different designs. Different figurines, decorated with flowers draw the tourists. The cynosure of all eyes in this flower show is the 23 feet high and 26 feet long flower replica of the Mahabalipuram Shore Temple. The flower bedecked entrance adds lustre to this show. Rare Imported varieties of flowers and display of bunches of lilium flowers, one of the species of cut flowers native to Nilgiris District attract tourists.

To encourage flower shows, many competitions are to be held and prizes awarded to the best gardens and parks. Anywhere between 150 to 200 competitors are to participate and prizes will be given by the Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu on the valedictory day of this flower show.

Further, this flower show tends to encourage enthusiasts and the general public. All tourists and the public, besides getting an awareness to raise gardens, have an opportunity to see many rare varieties of flowers.

In short, Hon'ble Amma has given to people as many schemes as there are varieties of colourful flowers in Ooty.

I heartily congratulate District collector Dr. P. Shankar and the officials of the Department of Horticulture for arranging this flower show in an excellent way.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma said: "I am always thinking about the ways in which I can do good to the people". This Government, I wish to inform, is functioning in that way.

Abraham Lincoln used to say: "Rather than thinking whether God is on our side, I consider whether we are on the side of God". People will be on the side of the Government which supports them. God too, likewise, will support. Hence Amma's Government enjoys both people's power and God's blessings.

I wind up my speech with a short story. A devotee did severe penance in a forest. God suddenly appeared before him with a mace in hand and asked him what boon he wanted. The devotee prayed: Please annihilate my enemies who are an obstacle to my progress. God granted the boon.

Shortly afterwards, the mace flew towards the devotee and hit his chest. The shocked devotee was gripped with fear and again undertook penance, thinking the mace had mistakenly hit him, the recipient of the boon. God appeared and said: "Devotee, I hurled the mace as you requested. Your mind which wants destruction of others for your progress, is your enemy. That is why, my mace tried to annihilate your thought. Have you shed your evil thought," God asked.

People will teach a lesson, taking the form of a mace, to those who remain unrighteous even while mouthing righteousness. To show gratitude is also righteousness.

This Government is one that follows the footsteps of Hon'ble Amma; one that carries out the ideas of Amma; one that implements welfare schemes for people on the path of Amma; one that acts only for the welfare of the people.

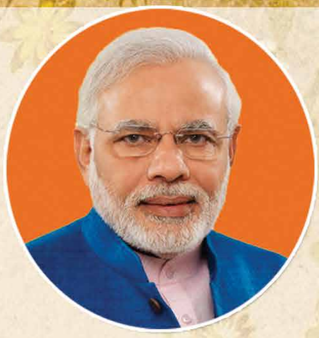
This is your Government; one that cares for your welfare. This Government will work as your servant in accordance with the golden saying of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma - 'People are with me; I am with them'.

Thiru. Gopalakrishnan, Nilgiris MP, Thiru. K.R.Arjun, Rajya Sabha Member, MLAs and members of the public had requested that Ooty bus stand should be modernized. The request was examined sympathetically and I am happy to inform that Rs. 2 crore has been allotted to upgrade and modernize the bus stand.

Under the Nilgiris District Women's Development scheme, I have disbursed a loan assistance of Rs. 5.76 crore to 145 women self-help groups.

Nandri! Vanakkam! ■

Chief Minister greets Prime Minister on his birthday



Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami greeted Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in Tamil on his birthday through a letter.

"I am happy to convey my hearty greetings on your birthday. Let Almighty God bestow on you good health and happiness and bless you to serve the people for ever as of today," the letter said.

In his thanking letter, the Hon'ble Prime Minister Thiru. Narendra Modi said:"I am delighted to receive your good wishes on the occasion of my birthday, and that too in Tamil. This reflects your personal touch, which I deeply appreciate.

It was very gracious of you to have remembered my birthday and conveyed your greetings to me". ■

News in Picture

Dr. Urjit R. Patel, Governor, Reserve Bank of India paid a courtesy call on the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the Secretariat on 02.05.2017. Chief Secretary to the Government Dr.Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Thiru. K.Shanmugam I.A.S., Principal Secretary, PWD Thiru. Shiv Das Meena I.A.S., Principal Secretary, Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Department Thiru. S.Krishnan I.A.S., Principal Secretary, Co-operation, Food and Consumer Protection Department Thiru. Pradeep Yadav I.A.S., Zonal Director of Reserve Bank of India for Chennai and Puducherry Mrs.Arundhati Mech and other high Government officials were present.

Launching Yercaud flower show...

Chief Minister lauds historic measures of his regime following in Amma steps

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the 42nd Yercaud Summer flower show on 27.05.2017 (*English Translation*)

My salutations to Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma,

Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture Thiru. R. Doraikkannu, who is sitting by my side after delivering an excellent speech at the 42nd Yercaud Summer Flower show, who has recorded several achievements in the agricultural sector from the day he assumed office as Minister in the Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's Cabinet till date and who, hailing from an agricultural family, has done whatever good is possible to farmers through his ministry,

Thiru. Apoorva Varma, Principal Secretary, Department of Tourism who delivered the welcome address in this excellent function,

Dr. K. Kamaraj, Kallakurichi Member of Parliament,

Thiru. V.Panneerselvam, Salem Member of Parliament,

Tmt. G. Chithra, Member of Legislative Assembly from Yercaud constituency

Thiru. G. Venkatachalam, MLA from Salem West constituency,

Thiru. A.B. Sakthivel, MLA from Salem South constituency,

Thiru. P. Manonmani, MLA from Veerapandi constituency,

Thiru. S. Raja, MLA from Sankagiri constituency,

Thiru. S.Vetrivel, MLA from Omalur constituency,

Thiru. A. Maruthamuthu, MLA from Gangavalli constituency,

Thiru.R.M.Chinnathambi, MLA from Athur constituency,

Thiru. R. Elangovan, President, Salem District Central Co-operative Bank,

Thiru. R.Chinnusamy, President, Salem District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union,

Thiru. Palanikumar, Commissioner, Department of Tourism,

Tmt. Archana Patnaik, Director, Department of Horticulture,

Thiru. V. Sampath, Salem District Collector who is to propose a vote of thanks,

Government officials, Print and Media friends,

My respects to all of you.

Yercaud is a hill station in Salem District, generally known as the Ooty of the poor. Yerikadu, has come to be known as Yercaud. The National Botanical Garden here hosts 3,000 varieties of trees and 1,800 kinds of plants. The Garden was set up in 1963. Yercaud is not only a tourist spot but a spiritual centre, surrounded by temples. The historic Mettur Dam is in this Salem District. The District people are all good souls who have generally permitted the location of this dam here, for agricultural cultivation in the delta Districts. I am extremely happy in seeing you all assembled here with cheerful faces like a parade by flowers.

Salem brings mango to our mind immediately, followed by steel as it is globally famous. History speaks about the presentation of a sword, made of Salem steel, by King Purushothaman to the Greek King Alexander.

Hon'ble Amma left us in inconsolable grief, only after fulfilling all the basic needs of the people. We are speedily executing the works she has left behind, in the path shown by her. The present Government carries out its works as if Hon'ble Amma is still amongst us.

When Amma ruled, she followed the tenets described in Tirukkural for a king. That is why her fame has spread in all places where Tirukkural is known.

Tirukkural says fame achieved by the eminence attained through hard work alone will last. Hon'ble Amma's fame will endure as long as the world lasts. This Government, functioning in the footsteps of Amma is serving you, the people, with your co-operation for enhancing the glory of Hon'ble Amma.

I inaugurated 3,971 scheme works costing Rs.330.84 crore for the Districts of Salem, Namakkal, Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri under Salem Zone on 07.03.2017. At a function held on 28.04.2017, I declared open 30 new buildings, costing Rs.19.72 crore and laid the foundation for 42 works costing Rs.16.35 crore. For 8,852 handloom weavers in Salem District, free electricity to the tune of Rs.11.31 crore was distributed.

This Government is reviving the traditional 'maramathu' scheme for reducing the impact of drought. Under that scheme, 48 works, costing Rs.3.20 crore are being implemented in Salem District.

Mettur dam was constructed in 1934 for improving the livelihood of farmers. On this occasion, through this function, I convey the happy news that I am inaugurating tomorrow the de-silting work of Mettur Dam, after 83 years, a first in Tamil Nadu's history.

Today, this Government, following in the footsteps of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is stepping into the 101st day after assuming office. In Salem District alone, Rs. 2.97 crore marriage assistance at the rate of Rs.25,000/- per head and gold for 'thaali' have been given to 1,191 poor women for their marriage. Under the Chief Ministers' Comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme of Amma, medical treatment costing Rs.12.11 crore has been given to 6,143 beneficiaries. Under the Green House Programme, sanction has been accorded for construction of 951 green houses with solar power panel at a cost of Rs.19.97 crore, for distribution to the poor. Drought relief to the extent of Rs.65.65 crore has been given to 1,41,272 farmers. For the first time in the whole of India, subsidy to the tune of Rs.12.59 crore has been given to 1,870 small, micro, horticulture and agriculture farmers for promoting micro irrigation.

Through Salem Highway Division, roads to a length of 45.607 kms have been upgraded at a cost of Rs.21.56 crore. Widening and repairing of roads running to a length of 88 kms are going on at a cost of Rs.10.76 crore. Through Highways Department, 8 bridges have been constructed at a cost of Rs.45.82 crore. Through Edappadi Highways Division, 121 kms roads have been laid and bridges have been constructed at a total cost of Rs.104.88 crore.

The Administrative and Information Technology building, constructed through the Tamil Nadu Electronics Corporation at a cost of Rs.19.72 crore on 50,000 sq.ft. area at the Information Technology and IT related Special Economic Zone in Jagir Ammapalayam, Salem, I wish to inform, will help the growth of Engineering and Arts Colleges around Salem City.

I feel it will be appropriate to narrate a parable at this juncture.

All ants gathered at a conference and elected an ant as the Global President for their individual upliftment. The President ant was greatly devoted to God and hence suddenly started to meditate. God appeared before the ant and asked it to seek a boon. Impelled by the conceit that God had appeared before it, the ant asked: 'O! God, death should occur if I bite'. God granted the boon. Engulfed by conceit, the ant leader wanted to immediately test the efficacy of the boon. As there was none but God in that place, the ant decided to bite God Himself with the notion what could He do nothing as He had already given the boon. The leader ant ran towards God and bit his leg. God brushed it aside and the ant fell down wailing, 'O! God your boon has no effect; it is I who am going to die". God replied: You wanted that death should occur if you bite; you did not specify that the bitten person should die. That is why this situation has come about".

I feel there is nothing more to add to what God has stated. You all know, can understand. We understand that patience and humility are needed for a leader and he should not utter anything with conceit or without consideration.

I, belonging to this Salem District have got a great opportunity to continue Hon'ble Amma's rule as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. Salem District has got this privilege which the rest of the Districts do not have. The people of Salem District have got the opportunity of meeting me and representing their grievances in person.

As a Minister in Hon'ble Amma's Cabinet, I got Amma's approval and implemented the long standing demands of the people of the backward District of Salem, like water supply, road facilities, bridges, underground drainage and developmental programmes. Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma sanctioned Rs.340 crore for a single bridge in Salem City --a two-tier bridge - and it is being executed. Likewise, all basic needs like railway bridges, dedicated water supply scheme, bridges across river and channels, widening of narrow bridges, quality roads including protected water supply, have been completed.

I am proud to say that it was during Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's rule, that Primary Health Centres were started in villages with the intention of providing medi-care to people in Salem District. It was Amma's Government which opened the largest number of Primary Health Centres in rural areas, not seen in any other regime, for providing treatment for people in their own localities. I wish to inform that efforts will be taken to meet all the basic needs of the people and make Salem District as a model District.

As I have already mentioned, 1,539 lakes have been taken up in the first phase under the ancient 'kudimaramathu' scheme and works like strengthening of the bunds and de-silting of lakes have been taken up at a cost of Rs.100 crore and they are about to be completed. Additionally 2,065 lakes will be taken up and Rs.300 crore have been allotted. With the participation of farmers' teams, the Government itself will take up the 'kudimaramathu' works. This is a huge project. Through this, rainwater can be saved in large quantities and used during periods of drought. It will re-charge ground water and the problem of supply of drinking water can be solved. We have brought this scheme for agriculture to prosper.

As I have already pointed out, Mettur dam, constructed in 1934, was not de-silted for nearly 83 years. The storage in the dam can be increased by nearly 10 per cent if it is de-silted. For that, Amma's Government will inaugurate the de-silting programme tomorrow in Mettur dam along with people and farmers. Not merely Mettur dam but in all anaicuts and lakes de-silting programme will be taken up. The sediments are given to farmers free. If the sediment is used, it will be a natural fertilizer and production will increase. As people also will be protected from diseases, Government is taking necessary steps for the excavation of these sediments.

This Government is Amma's Government. I have invited the Prime Minister to unveil a

portrait of Amma in the Legislative Assembly chamber. But some political leaders oppose it, with an ulterior motive. They say it is wrong to keep Amma's portrait in the Assembly hall. Will people accept this? No. They will not. For six times, Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma assumed office as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and carried out her duties in an excellent way. She was a leader who made the country turn and look at her in wonder, she was a super Chief Minister and dedicated her entire life for the people. We should ponder. Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma put a full stop to all those who sought to gain by deliberately casting a slur on her, a conspiracy of many Governments. Hence, I am duty-bound to say that the Assembly Hall will be honoured only when a portrait of Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is placed there. An excellent leader is one who remains in the hearts of people. Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma measures up to this yardstick. Let the leaders who rake up the portrait controversy go to Amma's memorial and see how people in thousands visit the memorial and pay their homage from morning to evening. On holidays, the number is nearly 50,000 and in other days around 30,000. So, in what way is it wrong to place a portrait of Amma in the Legislative Hall? The Court itself has given its verdict. What greater verdict is needed? Our tradition is to honour those leaders who have toiled for the people. In that respect, there is nothing wrong in placing Amma's portrait in the Assembly Hall. Let those leaders realize that we are installing only the portrait of that person who is in the hearts of the people.

Also, the centenary of our Ponmana Chemmal, Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. will be celebrated by Government in all the 32 Districts. It will culminate with a very grand celebration in Chennai in December. We have invited the Prime Minister to participate in that function. We expect him to honour our invitation. Declaring that these events will add glory to Amma, I wish to state that Amma's

Government will perform excellently. Those in the DMK are making many calculations. This is a Government function. So, I should refrain from speaking out (on political issues). But they are issuing one statement or the other daily. I am desilting; Amma's Government funds it. Amma's Government is doing what the people need. But some leaders are unable to tolerate even these things. They too have come forward to desilt, fearing we will become more popular. Alright. It is to be welcomed. Even the Opposition party has endorsed Amma Government's scheme. When Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. implemented the nutritious meals scheme, the then Leader of the Opposition ridiculed it. It was they who added later egg also to the meal's menu. It was the then Leader of the Opposition who lauded the scheme also. Likewise, Amma's Government has today given an excellent scheme, 'kudimaramathu', for the farmers. Thanking them for welcoming the scheme, I wish to state that this Government, functioning in the path laid out by Hon'ble Amma is a Government that will fulfill Amma's plans; it will continue implementation of welfare programmes in the same way as done by Amma. This Government functions only for the benefit of the people. This is your Government; a Government that takes care of your welfare.

I heartily congratulate the District Collector and the officials of the Departments of Horticulture and Tourism for organizing this function in an excellent manner. I take leave of you, stating that this Government will continue to work as your servant.

Nandri! Vanakkam!.

Avvaiyar Award for WIA chairperson for service to women, leprosy-affected

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat in Chennai on 02.05.2017 handed over the Avvaiyar Award for the year 2017 to Tmt. Padma Venkataraman, Chairperson of the Women's Indian Association, which is working for the advancement of women, children, the differently-abled and those affected by leprosy.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma announced that women who work for social reform, women advancement, communal amity, service to language, art and culture will be honoured every year on International Women's Day through conferment of Avvaiyar Award. The Avvaiyar Award is being given every year since 2012.

Tmt. Padma Vekataraman, Chairperson of Women's Indian Association, Chennai has been working for uplift of women and rehabilitation of leprosy patients for the last 30 years. With

a view to honour the services of Tmt.Padma Venkataraman, the Tamil Nadu Government has selected her for the Avvaiyar Award for the year 2017.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami honoured Tmt. Padma Venkataraman by handing over the Award which consists of a cheque for Rs. 1 lakh, the certificate, a gold medal of 8 gms and a shawl.

Tmt. Padma Venkatraman thanked the Tamil Nadu Government and the Chief Minister for honouring her with the award in recognition of her social service.

Speaking on the occasion, Tmt.Padma Venkataraman said, "I consider this a great honour to receive the prestigious Avvaiyar Award from the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. This only reflects on the Chief Minister's involvement and that of the Government of Tamil Nadu in the advancement women, the differently-abled and the leprosy-affected.

Women's Indian Association has been serving the above causes for the past 100 years without a break. Women today are reaping the fruits and the sacrifices of our past eminent women leaders. I have the privilege of serving leprosy-affected people through WIA and Government of Tamil Nadu covering all the 10 Government-run homes, colonies and the community-based people. We also take care of the next generation through education and vocational training. We strive our best to integrate them into the mainstream.

During natural calamities like floods, tsunami, etc., we reach out to the needy as early as possible and work towards sustainable development.

The Avvaiyar Award will only strengthen our resolve to serve society as best as possible. Once again I would like to thank the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Government of Tamil Nadu for encouraging us to continue our service to society.

I dedicate this Award to WIA for its continued service to humanity".

The Hon'ble Minister for Social Welfare and Nutritious Noon Meal Scheme Dr. V. Saroja, Chief Secretary Dr. Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Principal Secretary for Social Welfare and Noon Meal Scheme Dr.K.Manivasan I.A.S., and Director of Social Welfare V. Amuthavalli I.A.S. and other Government officials were present on the occasion.

Chief Minister opens 25 police stations, 488 quarters for police personnel

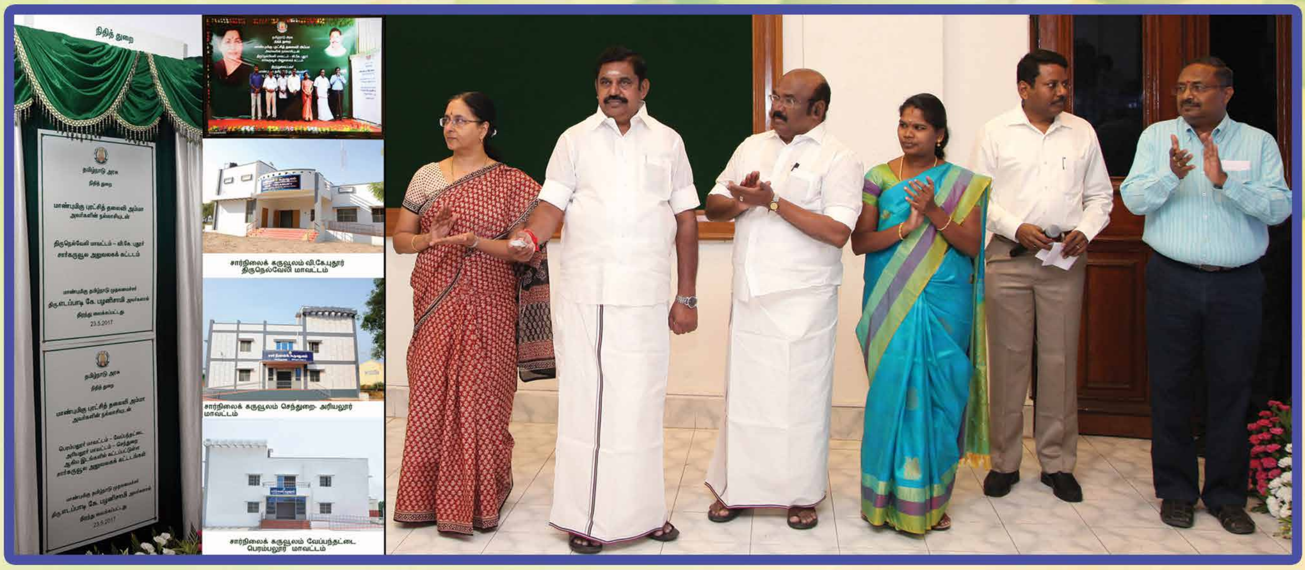
On behalf of the Home Department, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami declared open at the Secretariat on 08.05.2017 through video conferencing 488 quarters for Police Personnel, 25 Police Stations, eight other buildings for the Police Department, a District penitentiary building and barracks for the personnel of the Fire and Rescue Service Department, totally costing Rs.108.12 crore.

To further improve the efficiency of the Police Department that performs a variety of important duties, the Tamil Nadu Government that functions on the lines of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's rule, implements several schemes like construction of new Police Stations, Police quarters, effecting improvements to the infrastructure in the offices of the Department and distribution of new vehicles for patrolling.

In that way, the buildings declared open were: 125 quarters for constables at the armed Police complex at Virudhunagar, at the special armed Police complex at Sivakasi and in Srivilliputhur and 3 Police Stations built at Kattanur, Krishnankovil and Vanniampatti, all in Virudhunagar District totally costing Rs.18.61 crore; 32 quarters in Thiruvotriyur, Chennai, 80 quarters in Nellikuppam, Ramanatham and Cuddalore Armed Police complexes in Cuddalore District, 17 quarters in Morappur, Dharmapuri District, 10 quarters in Vathalakundu, Dindigul District, 45 quarters in Kenikarai, Ramanathapuram District, 16 quarters in Andipatti, Theni District, 32 quarters in Tenkasi, Tirunelveli District, 32 in Tiruchirappalli District, 99 in Villupuram, Ginjee and Ulundurpet, Villupuram District – totally 363 quarters (Rs.41.72 crore); 22 Police Stations (Rs.15.20 crore) constructed at Royapettah (Chennai City), Aazhiyaar (Coimbatore District), Dindigul West city (Dindigul), Chithamur, Koovathur, Salavakkam and Oragadam (Kancheepuram), Nallipalayam (Namakkal), Parthibanoor and Theriruveli (Ramanathapuram), Theevattipatti (Salem), Thanjavur Taluk, Papanasam and Thiruvonam (Thanjavur), Gudalur South (Theni), Manavaala

Nagar and Tiruthani All women Police Station (Tiruvallur), Tiruvarur Town (Tiruvarur), Suthamalli, Panavadalichatram and Tirunelveli Taluk (Tirunelveli) and Vathalai (Tiruchirappalli District); Barracks for 250 constables at Tiruvotriyur (Chennai city), administrative building and in-service training centre for the 14th regiment of the Palani Tamil Nadu Special Police Force (Dindigul), vehicle parking place for the 7th regiment of Tamil Nadu Special Police Force and administrative building for the 'Q' Branch Police (Krishnagiri), administrative building for the 'Q' Branch Police (Theni), rest rooms for 150 males and 50 women at Melmalayanur (Villupuram) and an administrative building at Nagercoil (Kanniyakumari) – all costing Rs.18.51 crore; District penitentiary at Perurani and Borstal School cum Prison for Women (Thoothukudi District), costing Rs.12.95 crore and Barracks for 50 Personnel of the Fire and Rescue Service Department at Mint (Chennai city) costing Rs.1.13 crore.

Three sub treasury buildings opened



Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami declared open through video conferencing at the Secretariat on 23.05.2017 three sub-treasury office buildings constructed at a total cost of Rs. 1.86 crore.

For administrative convenience, to avert recurring rental expenditure to Government and implement effectively some of the e-Governance schemes, for safe-keeping of valuable stamp papers and other articles, to provide facilities to pensioners and exclusive ramps to the differently-abled, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma announced that own buildings would be constructed for sub-treasuries functioning from rented buildings. In the last five and a half years, 45 sub-treasury buildings have been constructed at a cost of Rs.26.91 crore. Works costing Rs.12 crore are on for 19 more buildings.

The sub-treasury office buildings declared open are the ones at V.K.Puthur, Tirunelveli District on 2,500 sq.ft area with facilities like waiting room for the general public/ pensioners, safety vault and rooms for treasury officers (Rs.60 lakh); at Veppanthattai, Perambalur District (Rs.66 lakh) and at Senthurai, Ariyalur District (Rs.60 lakh).

Desilting of Mettur dam launched by Chief Minister, first in 83 years

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami inaugurated de-silting works with the help of beneficiaries at Manimangalam lake, Sriperumbudur, Kancheepuram District on 13.03.2017, by way of reviving the ancient 'kudimaramathu' scheme to de-silt the drought-hit dry beds of lakes and waterbodies for increasing their storage capacity.

The scheme, planned to execute 1,519 works in 30 Districts at a cost of Rs.100 crore turned into a people's movement and is implemented throughout the State. For 2017-2018, Rs.300 crore will be allotted and 2,065 works will be taken up.

Rain water harvesting has become a necessity to manage the growing water needs. As a part of this programme, the Tamil Nadu Government has ordered the implementation of a scheme for the removal of the sediment sand in anaicuts, channels and lakes to retrieve their capacity.

The State Government issued an order on 27.04.2017 granting permission to farmers,

potters and any member of the public to remove, free of cost, the desilted sediment from lakes, channels and reservoirs under the Public Works Department after obtaining the approval of the concerned District Collector.

As per this order, farmers can take away not more than 75 cubic metres (25 truck loads) of sediment sand for every acre of wet land, not more than 90 cubic metres (30 truck loads) for every acre of dry land; potters, for their trade, not more than 60 cubic metres of clay additionally and the general public, for their personal use, not more than 30 cubic metres of sediment sand, 'savudu' sand and gravel.

So far District Collectors have issued notifications for the removal of sediment sand from 36,345 water bodies out of the 42,115 in the State. From 9,986 water bodies, 44,10, 472 cubic metres of sediment sand have been removed. Beneficiaries include 86,355 farmers.

Construction of Mettur Dam in Salem District, was started in 1925 and completed in 1934. The biggest dam in Tamil Nadu, it is to be noted, has not been de-silted even once in these 83 years of its existence.

To mark the commencement of the execution of de-silting work in Mettur dam, the Tamil Nadu Government has given permission to farmers in the villages of Moolakadu, Kolathur and Pannavadi on the right bank of the dam and in the villages of Koonandiyur and Konur (West) on the left bank, to take away, in the first phase, one lakh cubic metres of sediment sand without payment.

Accordingly, the Hon'ble Chief Minister inaugurated on 28.05.2017, the desilting of the Mettur dam, a first in the history of Tamil Nadu. This will increase the storage capacity of the dam and the irrigation potential for agriculture.

Chief Minister declares open 6 bridges in various Districts

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami declared open a High-level bridge, constructed at a cost of Rs. 2.80 crore at Tiruvalangadu Panchayat Union, Ramapuram in Tiruvallur District through video conferencing from the Secretariat on 03.05.2017. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also inaugurated on the occasion, 5 new bridges constructed at a cost of Rs. 7.59 crore on behalf of the Rural Development and Panchayat Department.

The Tamil Nadu Government, following in the footsteps of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has been implementing various welfare schemes in rural areas to improve the standard of their lives. The schemes include supply of protected drinking water, providing health facilities, laying roads, constructing bridges, improving infrastructure by constructing new buildings for Panchayat and Panchayat Union offices replacing the damaged ones.

With this motive, the Hon'ble Chief Minister declared open a 150 metre long high-level bridge across Kosasthalaiyar River in Ramapuram in Tiruvalangadu Panchayat Union in Tiruvallur District. A bridge across Markandaiyan River in Veppanahalli in Krishnagiri District linking Marachatram and Kuppachiparai, constructed at an estimated cost of Rs. 1.95 crore, a high level bridge connecting Chettiyarkottai and Pumathanahalli in Karimangalam Union in Dharmapuri District constructed at a cost of Rs. 1.85 crore, a bridge on the Madappuram-Theni Road in Thirupuvanam Union in Sivagangai District constructed at a cost

of Rs. 1.75 crore, a bridge across Valappar river in Pathiniyapuram in Thattathimoolai in Tiruvarur District constructed at a cost of Rs. 1.11 crore and a bridge across Valappar river in Sarvamanipuram in Sangilipuram, constructed at a cost of Rs. 93 lakh were declared open by the Hon'ble Chief Minister.

Totally, 6 bridges costing Rs.10.39 crore were declared open by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami.

Hon'ble Minister for Municipal Administration, Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development and Special Programme Implementation Thiru. S.P.Velumani, Hon'ble Minister for Rural Industries Thiru. P. Benjamin, Chief Secretary Dr.Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department Prl. Secretary Thiru. Hans Raj Verma I.A.S., and high Government officials participated in the function.

News in Picture

Master N. Dharaneedharan, 7th standard student of the Kongu Vellalar Matriculation school, Tiruppur District who won the first prize in the 23rd International Yoga competition, conducted by the Tourism Department of Puducherry Government, met the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the Secretariat on 30.05.2017 with his parents, showed the certificate of his achievement and received blessings. Thiru. Udumalai K. Radhakrishnan, Hon'ble Minister for Housing and Urban Development, former MLA of Tiruppur District and former Minister Thiru. M.S.M. Anandan were present.

Chief Minister gives cheques to 72 achieving sportspersons

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami presented at the Secretariat on 26.05.2017 cheques to a total face value of Rs.4,09,11,500/- to 72 medallists in various International and National Sports competitions and 42 trainers of sports personnel.

To encourage Tamil Nadu sports personnel who win medals in sports events at National and International levels, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma enhanced the incentive amounts to them to Rs.2 crore to gold medallists in Olympic competitions, to Rs. 1 crore to silver medallists and Rs.50 lakh to winners of bronze medal. Likewise for winners in Asian Games and Commonwealth Games, the incentive was increased to Rs. 50 lakh for gold medallists, Rs.30 lakh for silver medallist and Rs.20 lakh to bronze medallists. She also implemented several excellent schemes like identifying talented sports personnel belonging to

Tamil Nadu and giving them high class training in their fields, setting up sports centres of international standards and providing financial assistance to talented sports personnel to record more achievements.

The break-up of the incentives distributed is: cheques for a total amount of Rs.2.83 crore to 66 personnel who had won medals in the 35 National competitions held in Kerala in 2015 and cheques for Rs. 27.90 lakh for their 29 trainers; cheque for Rs.50 lakh to Thiru. D. Cheralathan who had won gold in the World Cup Kabaddi Championship competition held at Ahmedabad, Gujarat State in 2016 and who found a place in the Indian team; a cheque for Rs.5 lakh to Selvi S. Anthoniammal who won gold in the 5th Beach Asian Kabaddi event held at Vietnam in 2016; a cheque for Rs.3 lakh to Thiru. Siva Mahadevan who won the International Master Title in Chess in 2016; Rs. 3 lakh cheque each to Selvi Pavithra and Selvi N. Nadiya (total Rs.6 lakh) who won silver in the 4th Asian Junior Kabaddi competition for women, held in Iran in 2016; Rs. 30 lakh cheque to Thiru. Sathyanarayan who coached Thiru. T. Mariyappan who won gold in the high jump event in Paralympics held in Brazil in 2016; a cheque for Rs. 3 lakh to Selvi G.K. Monisha who won the Woman International Master Title in Chess in 2015 and cheques to a total face value of Rs.1,21,500/- to 12 trainers who coached medalists from Tamil Nadu in the 11th South Asian Games held at Dacca, Bangladesh in 2010.

The recipients of the cheques conveyed their heartfelt gratitude to the Hon'ble Chief Minister.

Beware of brokers, approach TNSCB offices to learn what's going on

The Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board has been striving in the past 45 years to improve the living conditions of people living in urban slums by excellent implementation of housing, slum area improvement and resettlement schemes. The Board's activities were first implemented in Chennai city and then extended to other cities in Tamil Nadu.

With the objective of 'seeing God in the smile of the poor', the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board builds multi-storeyed tenements, develops plots and improves basic amenities, engages in resettlement schemes, renovates its dilapidated multi-storeyed tenements, and gives training in occupational and livelihood skills to the poor and especially to women and youth among the poor.

The Board is building housing tenements and making them available to beneficiaries with the participation of the Central and State Governments, under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, Rajiv Gandhi Housing Scheme, 'Houses for all urban slum families' before 2023 scheme under the Vision 2023 plan, and housing and resettlement scheme for those affected by Tsunami.

At present, multi-storeyed tenements are being constructed and allocated at Manali Pudhunagar, Vyasarpadi, Okkiyam Thuraipakkan in Kancheepuram District, Semmancheri, Perumbakkam, Maraimalainagar, and Athipattu in Tiruvallur District under various schemes.

Tenements in multi-storeyed flats are being provided or resettlement undertaken for families that are extremely poor and have occupied Government poramboke land, or have put up huts on the banks of rivers, or live in constructions on land allocated for project work, or have been affected by floods and natural disasters, when their case is recommended by the District Administration, Municipalities, and Public Works Department and Highways Department.

There are many complaints that brokers are cheating people by taking money from them promising to get tenements allotted to them. Let not members of the public be taken for a ride by such brokers and lose their money. The public should approach the nearby office of the Slum Clearance Board to learn about the actual state of affairs rather than be conned by such brokers. ■

New law colleges in three Districts

Statement of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami

on 25.05.2017 (*English Translation*)

An exclusive University for the study of law in the whole of South Asia -Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University – was established by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma for providing quality law education in the State. Under this university, 7 Government Law Colleges and one private self-financing law college are functioning. Also, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma declared open the Tamil Nadu National Law School, set up at a cost of Rs. 100 crore at Srirangam, Tiruchirappalli and lighted up the lives of students desirous of studying law.

The Tamil Nadu Government has taken a decision to set up gradually, enough law colleges in the State to provide, on the lines of the steps taken by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, quality law education at low cost to students.

In pursuance of this goal, a Government law college will be started from the 2017-2018 academic year in Villupuram, Dharmapuri and Ramanathapuram as there is no college for students desirous of studying law either in these Districts or neighbouring ones.

Enrollment of students in these new colleges will be 80 each for the 3-year law course and 80 each for the 5-year course. A special officer will be appointed for each of these colleges to undertake preliminary works for the setting up of the college.

For each of the three above mentioned colleges, an expenditure of Rs.2.27 crore will be incurred (totally Rs.6.81 crore). ■

Chief Minister invites Prime Minister to be Chief Guest at MGR centenary valedictory function

D.O. letter dated 24.05.2017 addressed by
Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to
Shri NarendraModi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

As you are aware, 2017 is the Birth Centenary year of Bharat Ratna Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR, the late Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR was one of the most illustrious, charismatic and popular Chief Ministers of the State. Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR is remembered nationally and internationally for having launched several innovative welfare programmes which have become model schemes implemented throughout the Country.

The Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR Nutritious Meal Programme implemented in all schools in Tamil Nadu has been commended by the Hon'ble Supreme Court and ordered to be replicated across the country. Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR laid the foundation for the rapid socio-economic growth of Tamil Nadu in the last 3 decades.

The Government of India honoured Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR with the highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna Award for his unparalleled public service.

To the people of Tamil Nadu and Tamil diaspora across the world, Puratchi Thalaivar Dr.MGR continues to be an inspirational figure who is always remembered for his qualities of magnanimity, generosity, commanding leadership and determination to fight for the legitimate rights of the States. Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR's life story will continue to inspire millions to strive for the greater public good through dedicated service.

The Government of Tamil Nadu is celebrating the Birth Centenary of Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR in a grand and befitting manner with various events organized throughout the 2017 calendar year in all the 32 Districts. **As a culmination of these events, a huge public function is proposed to be organized in Chennai, between 15th December and 31st December 2017, where nearly 3 to 5 lakh people are expected to participate. Sir, it would be a fitting tribute to the memory of Bharat Ratna Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR if the valedictory event of the Birth Centenary celebration is graced by you as Chief Guest.**

I request you to kindly consent to attend the valedictory event of the Birth Centenary celebration of Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR. Hon'ble Prime Minister may kindly indicate a convenient date between 15th December and 31st December 2017 for holding this event in Chennai.

TNSCB flats launched, software for online permission for building plans inaugurated

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami declared open at the Secretariat through video conferencing on 11.05.2017, 160 flats of the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board costing Rs.10.69 crore at the Kurinji Nagar scheme area of Coimbatore District and 64 more at the scheme area of Sugunapuram costing Rs.4.33 crore. Also declared open were the buildings costing Rs.22.98 crore of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The State Government, following the footsteps of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is implementing different housing schemes to benefit particularly the urban poor by satisfying one of the basic needs after taking into account the population expansion and urban development.

The Housing Board buildings declared open are: 108 apartments (Rs. 11.77 crore) constructed after demolishing 72 damaged apartments at the Pollachi Udumalpettai Main road in Chinniampalayam Village, Pollachi Taluk, Coimbatore District, the Range and Divisional Office complex for the Slum Clearance Board (Rs.1.72 crore) at Coimbatore, a Rs.6 crore Kalyana Mandapam with modern facilities constructed through the Chennai Metropolitan Co-operative Housing Society at Madhavaram Jambuli colony, Chennai, the Regional Deputy Director office of the Department of Town Planning and the office building of the Member-Secretary, Local Planning Committee (Rs.1.56 crore) at Tiruchirappalli and similar buildings (Rs.1.93 crore) at Tirunelveli.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also inaugurated the software developed at a cost of

Rs.2.60 crore for giving online clearance for building plans, house-site partitions and proposed alterations in land use. This new software will facilitate submission of applications through the portal www.tn.gov.in/tcp and to know the stage of processing for the sanctioning of the application through the unique number given by the computer at the time of submission of the application. Provisions have been made for forwarding all types of applications seeking sanction through internet to any subordinate office of the Department of Town Planning, to personal inspection of sites and to download the plan sanctioning order and the approved plan maps. Also provisions have been made to convey through SMS and e-mail receipt of the application through the Net, details of the date and time for personal inspection, additional information needed, giving opportunities, if the applicants so desired, to meet and offer explanations to officials, fee payment and plan sanctioning order.

News in Picture

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami reviewed at the Secretariat on 26.05.2017 the performance of the Department of Tamil Development and Information. Hon'ble Ministers for Information and Publicity Thiru. Kadambur Raju and Hon'ble Ministers for Hindu Religious & Charitable Endowments Thiru. Sevoor S. Ramachandran , Chief Secretary to the Government Dr. Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Thiru. K. Shanmugam I.A.S. (FAC), Secretary, Tamil Development and Information Department Thiru. R.Venkatesan I.A.S., Vice Chancellor, Tamil University Thiru. K. Baskaran, Director, Stationery and Printing Department Thiru. J. Jayakanthan I.A.S., Director (in charge), Tamil Development Department Dr. G. Vijayaraghavan, Director (Translation), Tamil Development Department Dr. N. Arul, Director, Ulaga Tamizh Sangam Dr. K.M. Sekar, Information and Public Relations Department Additional Director (Information), Thiru. S.P. Ezhilazhagan, Additional Director (Public Relations), Thiru. O.L.Ravindran and other high Government officials participated.

Chief Minister lays foundation stone for Rs. 140 crore flood prevention works

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami laid the foundation on 08.05.2017 through video conferencing at the Secretariat, for flood prevention works costing Rs.140.01 crore in the Taluks of Cuddalore, Chidambaram, Kattumannarkovil and Panruti in Cuddalore District . The Chief Minister also inaugurated/ declared open 40 scheme irrigation works, one bridge, one service road, one foot bridge and 4 Circuit Houses of the Public Works Department, all costing Rs.155.92 crore.

Considering the damages caused by the rains and floods in Cuddalore District and to undertake permanent flood prevention steps, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, had announced in the 2016-2017 budget that works like widening of drainage canals and strengthening of the bunds of channels and rivers would be taken up by the Government.

By way of implementing the announcement, the Chief Minister laid the foundation for 5 flood prevention works – upgrading the water carrying capacity of Manavaikkal and Old Coleroon in Kattumannarkovil and Chidambaram Taluks, improving the draining capacity of Paasimuthaan and Thillaiamman Odais and Omakulam, Khan Saheb and Muthiah Pillai drainage canals in Childambaram Taluk, restoration and strengthening of Gadilam river from Visur Village to Devanampattinam village in Cuddalore Taluk, restoration and strengthening of Visur and Periyakattupalayam Odais in Panruti Taluk and restoration and improving Velappakkam channel in Cuddalore and Panruti Taluks.

The PWD projects inaugurated/declared open are: 40 works like rehabilitation of dams, construction of new dams, re-structuring and modernization works, construction of new check dams, re-structuring of check dams, re-structuring of bed dams, restoration of

lakes, digging of channels, restoration and modernizing of supply channels, improved power operated sluices after repairs and renovation and upgradation of shutters in the District s of Ariyalur, Coimbatore, Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Kancheepuram, Kanniyakumari, Karur, Krishnagiri, Pudukkottai, Salem, Sivagangai, Thanjavur, Theni, Thoothukudi, Tiruvannamalai, Tiruchirappalli and Vellore (Rs. 142.30 crore); a bridge across Varaha Nadhi near Aadu Palam, Thenkarai village, Periyakulam Taluk, Theni District (Rs.3.75 crore); a foot bridge across the surplus channel of Perumaanaadu tank in Perumaanaadu Village, Eluppur Taluk, Pudukkottai District (Rs.1 crore); a service road on the left bank of Vaigai river in Paramakudi Taluk, Ramanathapuram District; 4 circuit houses in the Podhigai complex, Greenways Road, Adyar, Chennai (Rs.4.84 crore).

The Hon'ble Chief Minister gave away the Best Maintained Dam Award for 2015-2016 to Thiru. V.Shanmugam, Chief Engineer and Thiru. R.Selvaraj, Superintending Engineer (PWD) by presenting them shields and certificates for the maintenance of Sattur Dam, Tiruvannamalai District and cheques for Rs.10,000/- each and certificates to Thiru. R.Govindarajan, Executive Engineer, Thiru. S.Arunagiri, Assistant Executive Engineer and Thiru. M. Ramesh, Assistant Engineer.

News in Picture

Floral tributes were offered on behalf of Tamil Nadu Government to a portrait of Tamil Scholar Robert Caldwell placed near his statue in the Anna Square complex, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai, in connection with his 203rd birth anniversary by Hon'ble Ministers Thiruvalargal D. Jayakumar (Fisheries, Finance, Personnel and Administrative Reforms), P. Benjamin (Rural Industries), Sevvoor S. Ramachandran (HR & CE), S.R.Vijayakumar, MP, Tmt. P. Valarmathi, Chairman, Textbook and Educational Services Corporation, Thiru. R.Venkatesan I.A.S., Secretary (FAC), Tamil Development and Information Department and Dr. G Vijayaraghavan, Director (in charge), Tamil Development Department.

Chief Minister launches Amma Tamil Software

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami launched the "Amma Software Word Processor" at a function in the Secretariat in Chennai on 16.05.2017 and the first copy of the Word Processor was received by the Hon'ble Minister for Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Thiru. Sevvoor S.Ramachandran.

The Tamil Nadu Government has launched many schemes for the development of Tamil including honouring those who have done yeoman service for the language, translating Tirukkural in other international languages, giving monthly pension to indigent Tamil scholars, and digitising and releasing rare Tamil books.

In the same manner, just like word processor in English is used to check spelling and grammar, the Tamil Development Department has developed word processor in Tamil to check mistakes and also to write the language correctly. The cost of the software is Rs. 300/-. To start with, 10,000 copies of the Tamil Software are being supplied to all Government Departments at no cost by the Tamil Development Department.

The function was attended by Chief Secretary Dr.Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Secretary (FAC) for Tamil Development and Information Department Thiru. R.Venkatesan I.A.S., Director (in charge) of Tamil Development Dr. K.Vijayaraghavan and high Government officials.

Buildings opened for Animal Husbandry

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami declared open through video conferencing at the Secretariat on 23.05.2017 a fish landing centre set up at a cost of Rs.9.90 crore at Thangachimadam, three live stock dispensary buildings at Tiruvottiyur, Sozhandur and Erwadi (Rs.63 lakh) and a livestock breeding and fodder development station building (Rs.58 lakh) at Ramanathapuram – all in Ramanathapuram District.

Also declared open were the buildings, costing Rs.25.20 crore of the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries. To achieve a wholesome integrated growth in fisheries, the Tamil Nadu Government, following the track laid by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is implementing many schemes. They include increasing fish production, protecting fisheries, ensuring rich and lasting fish catch, improving aquaculture, fishing harbours for safe-stationing of fishing vessels, improving the infrastructure of fish landing centres, providing sea shore related infrastructure for landing and handling the fish in a hygienic manner, strengthening the facilities for inland fish marketing, strengthening the human resources development in the fisheries sector and improving the welfare and living standards of fishermen.

Other buildings declared open were: 28 veterinary dispensary buildings with operation theatre, laboratory and treatment hall in the Districts of Namakkal, Madurai, Pudukkottai, Thoothukudi, Tiruvannamalai and Tirunelveli (Rs.5.94 crore); a building for the veterinary investigation section, constructed at a cost of Rs.61 lakh in Karur; developed fish farms at Kulithalai, Karur District, Chinnaaru, Dharmapuri District, Anaipatti, Dindigul District, Vaigai dam, Theni District and at Manimutharu, Tirunelveli District (Rs.15.10 crore), a fish landing centre at Samandanpettai, Nagapattinam District (Rs.75 lakh), a new training and research centre building at Madurai for the Veterinary Science University (Rs.80 lakh), a bungalow for the Vice-Chancellor and quarters for Registrar and Director in the Tamil Nadu Veterinary Science University Complex in Madhavaram Dairy Farm, Tiruvallur District (Rs. 2 crore).

More vehicles for ambulance, mother-child care service

Twenty-five new vehicles, costing Rs.3.55 crore were inducted for the '108' ambulance service and 10 more, costing Rs.86.89 lakh for the '102' mother-child care service on 18.05.2017 at the Secretariat by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami who flagged them off.

Precious human lives are lost every year in road accidents. The affected families not only suffer great mental stress but economic crisis too on account of the loss of a bread winner of the family. To reduce accidents and prevent loss of life, the Tamil Nadu Government, following in the footsteps of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is implementing many schemes like '108' ambulance service, establishing accident treatment centres and strengthening head injury sections. At present, 855 vehicles are in the fleet of '108' ambulance service and in the last 6 years, 48.19 lakh people, including 12.13 pregnant women have made use of the service. To streamline this service further, 25 new vehicles have been inducted.

The '102' mother-child care service, to safely commute pregnant women who have delivered in Government Hospitals back to their homes, sick children below one year of age back to their homes with their mothers after treatment/ immunisation and those who undergo vasectomy and tubectomy in Government Hospitals to their homes, was launched by the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in 2013, first in Chennai city and later extended gradually to all Districts. At present, 61 vehicles are in use in this service.

The 10 vehicles now inducted, will be put to use in Government Hospitals in the Districts of Chennai, Kancheepuram, Tiruvallur, Cuddalore, Tiruvannamalai, Villupuram, Krishnagiri, Ariyalur, Perambalur and Dharmapuri.

The Hon’ble Chief Minister inspected the vehicles and the devices and other facilities provided in them. All the 35 vehicles are fitted with the Geographical Positioning System (GPS) for rendering speedy service.

Chief Minister greets Prime Minister

In connection with the completion of three years of office by the Government headed by Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami sent a greeting letter.

The letter read: “Congratulations on the successful completion of three years in office as the Prime Minister of India. India has made great strides under your able, efficient and dynamic leadership.

On this occasion, I would like to thank you for extending all co-operation and support to the Government of Tamil Nadu.

I pray that the Almighty blesses you with many more years of good health to continue serving the Nation and the people of India”.

Rs.37.32 crore underground drainage scheme in Krishnagiri Municipality

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami inaugurated through video conferencing at the Secretariat on 03.05.2017, the Rs.37.32 crore underground drainage scheme in Krishnagiri Municipality. He also declared open 20 completed projects of the Department of Municipal Administration and Water Supply costing Rs.24.35 crore and also a school building at the Government middle school for the hearing impaired at Kattupudukulam, Pudukkottai, constructed at a cost of Rs.1.16 crore.

Implementing civic works in tune with the increasing population in urban areas and providing protected drinking water and drainage facilities are the priority tasks of local bodies. To encourage the local bodies that take up these works, improve public health, remove sullage and fulfill the drinking water needs of the people, the Tamil Nadu Government which follows in the footsteps of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is executing many schemes in an excellent way.

Besides the underground drainage for Krishnagiri, the other schemes inaugurated were: augmenting drinking water scheme in Mohanur Town Panchayat, Namakkal District (Rs.3.66 crore); additional class rooms in the Chennai Urdu Girls Middle School in Royapuram zone (Rs.56 lakh), a new Community Health Centre (Rs.2.27 crore) and classrooms in Chennai Middle School at

Venkata Samadhi Street (Rs.1.63 crore), both in Thiru.Vi.Ka zone, a new urban Primary Health Centre in Meccapuram Main Road in Teynampet zone (R.1.03 crore), an office building for the 150th Ward in Ponni Nagar, Kaarampakkam in Valasarawakkam zone (Rs.50 lakh), an urban Primary Health Centre in Maduvankarai Five Furlong road and an office building for the 174th ward, both in Adyar zone (Rs.1.58 crore) and an urban Primary Health Centre in Kapaleeswarar Nagar, Neelankarai, Sholinganallur zone (Rs.1.28 crore) - all in Greater Chennai Municipal Corporation; under Municipal Administration, a new bus stand in Manapparai Municipality, Tiruchirappalli District (Rs.5 crore), a bio-gas facility for Dindigul Corporation (Rs.90 lakh), a night shelter for the homeless in Cuddalore Municipality (Rs.50 lakh); under Town Panchayat Administration a residential complex for sanitary workers in Bargur Town Panchayat, Krishnagiri District (Rs.50 lakh), an overhead tank for drinking water in Mallasamudram Town Panchayat, Namakkal District (Rs.75 lakh), modern crematoriums in Vellore and Senthamangalam Town Panchayats (Rs.1.40 crore), weekly shandy shops in Mohanur Town Panchayat, Namakkal District (Rs.50 lakh), a bridge in Peralam Town Panchayat, Tiruvarur District (Rs.50 lakh), office buildings in Surandai and Tiruvengadam Town Panchayats, Tirunelveli District (Rs. 1 crore), a developed bus stand in Tiruvengadam Town Panchayat, Tirunelveli District and a school building under the Department of Differently Abled Welfare at the Government middle school for the hearing impaired at Kaattupudukulam, Pudukkottai city (Rs.1.16 crore).

News in Picture

The Tamil Nadu Cabinet met at the Secretariat on 02.05.2017. Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** presided.

Tiruvalluvar now speaks in Korean

A Rs. 21.77 crore building constructed for the Government press of the Department of stationery and printing at Chennai, was declared open by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami at the Secretariat through video conferencing on 23.05.2017. The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu also declared open the Anna Memorial Park, set up within the Anna Memorial complex at a cost of Rs.2.62 crore, commissioned a special book binding machine at the Government press in Chennai (Rs.60 lakh) and released a translated version of Tirukkural in the Korean language (Rs.36 lakh).

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, making a statement under Rule 110, had announced that a new permanent building would be built to replace the old Red Building within the 5 acre Government press complex, Chennai that was totally destroyed with all its machinery in a fire accident on 31.10.2013.

Likewise, in the statement made in the Legislative Assembly under Rule 110 on 14.05.2013, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had announced that the Greater Chennai Municipal Corporation would set up a beautiful park by developing a unused three acre site within the Perarignar Anna Memorial complex.

Accordingly, the Chennai Corporation has set up a park on an area of 12,280 sq.metre at a cost of Rs.2.62 crore within the Perarignar Anna Memorial on the Kamaraj Salai. The memorial is maintained by the Department of

Information and Public Relations. The park sports several facilities including recreation for children.

On 29.09.2015, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had announced in the Legislative Assembly in a statement made under Rule 110 that considering the affinity between the Tamil and Korean languages, the long standing request of the Korean people for a Korean translation of Tirukkural, and that Tamils and Koreans live in each other's countries, the world renowned Tirukkural would be translated and published through the International Institute of Tamil Research. Rs. 36 lakh would be allotted for this.

To implement Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's statement, Tirukkural was translated into the Korean language and was published. Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu released the translated work and Thiru. Hyung Tae Kim, South Korean Consul General in Chennai received the first copy. Speaking on the occasion, Thiru. Kim said: "I am very honoured to receive the first copy of Tirukkural in the Korean language. I know Tirukkural has a 2,000 year history. The world renowned philosopher Tiruvalluvar wrote this book. The Korean people will relish this invaluable book of wisdom. Thank you very much, Tamil Nadu Government".

Temple bronzes get safe centre in Tiruvalanchuzhi temple

A centre for safe-keeping of temple bronzes and the Thiruvarur District Government music school building, together costing Rs.1.70 crore were declared open by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami at the Secretariat on 08.05.2017. He also laid the foundation for the Rs.85 lakh Tiruvannamalai District Government Music School building.

The foundation of spirituality is worship in holy places; the basis for places to be declared sacred is the structure of the temple and the type of worship offered there. To safeguard the greatness of temples, the Tamil Nadu Government, functioning on the lines of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is executing several tasks like taking up repair works in temples, ensuring performance of daily pooja without any break, retrieving temple assets in encroachment and improving their income and providing necessary facilities to devotees.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister declared open the centre for safe-keeping of temple bronzes, constructed at a cost of Rs.95 lakh in Arulmigu Kapardheeswarar temple, Tiruvalanchuzhi,

Kumbakonam Taluk, Thanjavur District and a new building for the Tiruvarur District Government music school on 315 sq metre area in Tiruvarur town (Rs.75 lakh).

The Tiruvannamalai District Government music school will come up at Samudram Village on 0.20.5 hectare area at a cost of Rs. 85 lakh.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had announced in the Legislative Assembly on 12.08.2014 that pooja accessories like bronze thaambalam (plate), dhoopakkaal, bell, karthikai vilakku and thongu vilakku would be presented to 10,000 small temples including those located in the residential areas of SC/St in Villages, at a cost of Rs.2.50 crore. By way of inaugurating this scheme, these pooja articles were distributed to poojaris on 15.09.2015.

Expanding this scheme, the Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami distributed these pooja articles to poojaris to cover 10,000 more small temples in all the Districts.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also inaugurated a scheme for distribution of 'panchaamritam' to 2,000 devotees daily after the evening pooja at a cost of Rs.11 lakh per year. ■

Own buildings inaugurated for 7 Sub Registrar offices

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami declared open on 17.05.2017 through video conferencing at the Secretariat, seven sub-registrar's office buildings constructed at a cost of Rs.3.98 crore.

Besides rooms for the staff, these buildings have facilities such as computer room, safety vault for registered documents, waiting hall for the general public, ramps for the use of the differently-abled, wide footpaths, protected drinking water and modern toilets.

The Tamil Nadu Government, functioning on the lines shown by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is implementing a scheme to construct own buildings for the sub-registrars' offices functioning in rented buildings to obviate the difficulties of inadequate space, both for the maintenance of documents and for the efficient working of the staff and for providing adequate facilities to the general public who turn up in large numbers at these offices.

The offices declared open were located at Senthurai, Dindigul District (Rs.58 lakh), Kancheepuram (for joint sub-registrar no.4) (Rs.50 lakh), Kalayarkovil, Sivagangai District, Kallidaikurichi, Tirunelveli District, Colachel, Kanniyakumari District, Pammal, Kancheepuram District and Vikramangalam, Ariyalur District (each costing Rs.58 lakh).

Working women's hostel opened in Perambalur

அரசு பணிபுரியும் மகளிர் விடுதி பெரம்பலூர்
பெரம்பலூர் மாவட்டம்

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma ordered construction of Government hostels for working women to provide them safe accommodation in big cities, especially in District Headquarters, at a reasonable cost.

With this view the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat on 03.05.2017 declared open through video conferencing a working women's hostel in Perambalur constructed by the Social Welfare and Noon Meal Department at a cost of Rs. 1.01 crore and a dormitory to accommodate 80 first and second year teacher training students of the Middle School Teachers' Training centre in Tambaram Seva Sangam complex.

The function was attended by the Hon'ble Minister for Social Welfare and Noon Meal Scheme Dr.V.Saroja, Chief Secretary Dr.Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Principal Secretary for Social Welfare and Noon Meal Scheme Thiru. K.Manivasan I.A.S., Principal Secretary for Differently-Abled Welfare Department (Additional Charge) Thiru. Mohammed Nazimuddin I.A.S., Commissioner (In charge) for Differently-Abled Thiru. Asish Kumar I.A.S., Director of Social Welfare Department Tmt. V.Amuthavalli I.A.S., and other high Government officials participated.

17 vehicles for Farm Department officials

To usher in a second green revolution in Tamil Nadu and to protect the interests of farmers, the State Government, treading the path of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is implementing many pioneering schemes. These include bridging the gap in agricultural productivity through appropriate farm practices, increasing food crops, micro irrigation scheme, movement for rain fed cultivation and a scheme for increasing seed production.

Joint Directors of Agriculture Department in Districts are attending to important works like monitoring the execution of the agriculture welfare schemes, integrating the works and taking necessary steps for the flow of scheme benefits to farmers in time. To further improve their efficiency and for their official use, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami distributed 17 vehicles, purchased at a cost of Rs.1,45,36,000/- at the Secretariat on 23.05.2017 by making a token presentation of vehicle keys to five drivers.

Five hostels opened for BC, MBC students

Five hostels for the Backward and Most Backward Class school and college students and an office building for the Tamil Nadu Backward Class Economic Development Corporation, all costing Rs. 8.26 crore were declared open through video conferencing at the Secretariat by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami on 16.05.2017.

To ensure that Backward, Most Backward and Minority Community students prosecute their studies without dropping out and for their education, social development, growth and prosperity, the Tamil Nadu Government treading the path of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is implementing many schemes like construction of new school buildings, hostels and enhancing the incentive amount given to top scorers at the District level.

The buildings declared open by the Hon'ble Chief Minister were: 2 hostels on 972sq. metres to accommodate 100 school students at Thoothukudi (Rs. 1.68 crore), a hostel for women college students at Bodinayakanur, Theni District (Rs. 1.45 crore), a hostel for polytechnic college boy students at Palani, Dindigul District (Rs. 1.45 crore), a hostel for school boys at Poondi, Tiruvallur District (Rs. 84 lakh) and an office building for the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Economic Development Corporation at Egmore, Chennai (Rs. 2.84 crore).

Chief Minister urges Prime Minister against privatization of Salem Steel Plant

D.O. letter dated 26.04.2017 addressed by Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

"I write to bring to your kind attention that there have been recent media reports indicating that the Government of India is considering the privatization of the Salem Steel Plant, Tamil Nadu, amongst some other steel plants elsewhere in the country. It is reported that the privatization is being proposed to strengthen the balance sheet of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL).

Salem Steel Plant has acquired a global reputation for its high quality steel and is an iconic symbol for the State and the people of Tamil Nadu have a deep sense of pride and attachment to this Public Sector Plant. People of Tamil Nadu over the years have struck a close chord with the larger Central PSUs located in the State including the Neyveli Lignite Corporation, Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd., and the Integral Coach Factory. Proposals to disinvest or privatize any of these CPSUs arouses discontent amongst the people of the State.

In the case of the Salem Steel Plant, the Government of Tamil Nadu had acquired about 15.5 sq.km. of land in 9 villages more than four decades ago in the foot hills of Kanjamalai, Salem District. It was possible to undertake such extensive land acquisition mainly because of the Public Sector character of the plant. Today, any proposal to privatize the Salem Steel Plant would cause considerable unrest amongst the people, particularly amongst those whose lands were acquired. Land is perhaps the most valuable and sought after asset in the possession of Salem Steel Plant today. Further, Salem Steel Plant provides employment to about 2,000 persons and many ancillary and subsidiary units also depend on it.

Further, the State Government has supported the expansion project costing Rs.2,005 crore of the Salem Steel Plant with a structured package of incentives in the form of Soft loan, Capital Subsidy, Electricity Tax Exemption and Environmental Protection Subsidy. In 2015, the Government of Tamil Nadu granted an extension of one year from 01.11.2010 to 31.10.2011 to enable Salem Steel Plant to complete its expansion activities and avail the incentive package.

Given the above context, where the establishment and subsequent expansion of the Salem Steel Plant have received so much support from the people and Government of Tamil Nadu, primarily on account of its public sector character, the recent news of the proposed privatization of the Plant by the Government of India has caused lot of apprehension and dismay amongst the people of the State.

It has always been our belief that the Public Sector Undertakings are capable of performing very well provided they are given the right support and direction in the dynamic economic scenario. The causes for the Company's recent losses must be studied and Salem Steel Plant must be given a chance to improve its efficiency and make a turn around. If that is done, I expect that Salem Steel Plant will swiftly transform once again into a profit making Company.

I therefore request you to kindly intervene in the matter urgently and advise the Ministry of Steel and the Steel Authority of India Ltd., to reconsider any proposal that they may have of privatizing the Salem Steel Plant".

Chief Minister invites PM to unveil Amma's portrait in Legislative Assembly

D.O. letter dated 24.05.2017 addressed by **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami,** Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

I have great pleasure in informing you that the Government of Tamil Nadu have proposed to unveil the portrait of former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Puratchi Thalaivi AMMA in the Chamber of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, Fort St. George, Chennai.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi AMMA had dedicated her life to the cause of Tamils worldwide and left an indelible mark on the Indian political landscape. Hon'ble AMMA had made significant contributions by taking up the cause of Tamil Nadu, its language, culture and development including on the floor of the House.

Sir, a towering personality and statesman like you, who has upheld the finest traditions of our vibrant democracy and maintained the cherished values of our Parliamentary system, would be the befitting person to unveil the portrait of our revered leader Hon'ble AMMA. The people of Tamil Nadu would be extremely happy if you could kindly consent to unveil the portrait of Hon'ble AMMA in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Chamber.

I, therefore, seek your convenience to grace the occasion on any day during the month of July, 2017 as the Chief Guest of the function to be held in the Assembly Chamber and to unveil the portrait of Hon'ble AMMA.

KIA Motors skipped Tamil Nadu 'only due to its internal policy'

It has been circulated in certain social media platforms like Facebook and Whats app and also published in some daily Newspapers that KIA motors, a South Korean Auto mobile company decided to set up its factory in Andhra Pradesh after Government of Tamil Nadu did not extend necessary assistance to them. An individual from Chennai has alleged in his Facebook post about the infract corrupt practices in land allotment which led to KIA Motors shifting to Andhra Pradesh. This post is being widely circulated in social media platforms and reported in Newspapers. The whole story is totally baseless and done with an intention only to malign the Government.

In this regard, the following facts are furnished:

During June / July 2016, when KIA Motors was showing interest in investing in India and Government of Tamil Nadu established contacts with them and discussions were also held with Hyundai, who were the major shareholder in the KIA Motors. This was done to leverage through the good offices of an existing investor in the State. The details of the action taken by the State is given below:

(i) When KIA Motors expressed interest to establish project in India, the then Additional Chief Secretary to Government Tamil Nadu, Industries Department wrote to Mr. Han-Woo Park, CEO & President KIA Motors South Korea inviting him to establish the manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu. The Government of Tamil Nadu offered a structured package of support including land, power, water, fiscal incentives and single window facilitation to the company.

(ii) Mr. Han-Woo Park, CEO & President KIA Motors replied to the Government of Tamil Nadu on 1st September 2016, expressing his gratitude for the invitation to setup a manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu. He further mentioned that the company was conducting a feasibility study on whether to

setup another plant in a destination outside of Korea and have considered India as one of the destinations. Tamil Nadu being an excellent investment destination for foreign companies and due to Government's tremendous support, Hyundai Motor Company has two plants in Tamil Nadu has been able to flourish in India.

To quote the CEO in the said letter, he says "However, we very regretfully will not be able to consider the State of Tamil Nadu for Kia's potential greenfield project in India due to the business needs and requirements of our company and stakeholders, including, without limitation, geographical diversification, branding differentiation and diversification of supply channels and so forth. **Under such business needs and requirements of our company and stakeholders, I hope you kindly understand that we have not established our overseas plants in the same States where the plants of Hyundai Motor Company are located (such as in the United States of America, China, Europe).** As you may be aware, Kia is controlled by its own management and board of directors who are responsible to Kia's shareholders. Although Kia is a sister company of Hyundai Motor Company, it operates completely independently for its own business needs and requirements. Therefore, we respectfully ask for your kind understanding. Nevertheless, I will actively seek opportunities to work with the Tamil Nadu Government in the near future. I would greatly appreciate your understanding and consideration and would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Government of Tamil Nadu".

It is reiterated that KIA Motors chose not to set up industry in Tamil Nadu only due to their internal policy of not establishing a new unit in the same State where Hyundai is functioning. Moreover, Hyundai Motors (major shareholder in KIA Motors) has announced additional investment in its existing unit at SIPCOT Irungattukkottai Industrial Park to the tune of Rs. 5,000 crore. This is a testimony to the fact that the Government of Tamil Nadu has been extending complete cooperation and striving to provide best investment opportunity to all Industries.

Ford Motors - Invest in Gujarat in 2012

Further, there are some reports that major investors like Ford are investing outside Tamil Nadu. In this regard, the following facts are furnished:

Ford Company has so far invested around Rs. 4,500 crore with a production capacity of 2 lakh cars and 2.5 lakh car engines per annum, providing employment to over 5,000 people in Tamil Nadu. During the discussion with the Hon'ble Chief Minister in 2012, the Executive Director of Ford Company cited that the main reason for establishing their project in Gujarat was to provide a better logistics solution and better service delivery mechanism at a reduced transaction time and cost. The approximate cost of logistics alone has been estimated at Rs. 70 crore. Thus, Ford Motor company invested in a greenfield project in Gujarat only to avoid additional transport freight cost to the Company. M/S Ford have explained that 60 % of market for their cars lies in North and Western part of India and they had to invest on a project in Gujarat to meet this demand.

Even for export of cars, they wanted to have another port apart from Ennore and found Gujarat port as a feasible and commercially viable option.

The above points stand as a testimony to the fact that the establishment of their unit in Gujarat in 2012 was more a commercial decision and not due to any difficulty in operating in Tamil Nadu.

Infact, considering benefits of investing in Tamil Nadu Ford has now invested Rs. 1,300 crore in setting up Global technology and Business Research Centre at Sholinganallur, Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu. ELCOT has allotted 28 acres for this project and this shall generate employment to over 12,000 persons (direct and indirect).

This is the first and only Research and Development centre of the Company set up outside the United States of America.

New Investments coming up in Tamil Nadu:

It has been alleged in some sections of the Media that no new investment is coming into the State of Tamil Nadu. Contrary to what has been reported, several new Companies are planning to invest in Tamil Nadu. Due to the continuous follow up by the State Government and facilitation offered, the following projects are set to be established in Tamil Nadu:

1.Investment proposal of PSA Peugeot Citroen (PSA)

PSA Peugeot Citroen, France is currently planning to establish an integrated manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu in Kancheepuram District and Hosur by establishing 3 production facilities.

The initial investment envisaged in the 3 facilities will be about Rs. 3,000 crore. This investment is further expected to increase to Rs. 4,000 crore in the vehicle and powertrain projects. The proposed employment is around 1,500 persons.

Other major Industrial projects like Hyundai (Expansion), Yamaha Musical Instruments, Xuzhou Construction Machinery manufacturing Company, Vedanta ltd., ITC Ltd., (Expansion), CEAT Tyres, Fruedenberg, Germany are proposing to invest around Rs. 15,000 crore in Tamil Nadu, creating employment opportunities for about 6,500 persons.

Many of the projects for which MoUs were signed during GIM 2015 have taken off and so far 10 projects namely M/s. Microsoft Corporation (India) Pvt. Ltd., Amway, TNPL, Takasago, Growth Link Overseas Company, Samsung, Saint Gobain Ltd., MRF Ltd., Sun Edison Solar Power India Pvt. Ltd., Welspun Renewable Energy Pvt. Ltd., have already been inaugurated.

Further, for seven projects like Lotus Footwear, Apollo Tyres, ITC Ltd., TVS Motors, Saint Gobain, MRF Ltd., Shenglong Bio Tech Pvt. Ltd., Embassy Logistic Park Foundation Stones have been laid. Manyother projects are under advanced stages of implementation.

The above facts and figures will clearly show that Tamil Nadu continues to be a favourite destination for investors and committed investments are taking roots within the investment period as per the MoUs. The State will strive as always to promote industrial growth and development in the State.

Chief Minister seeks assent to Bills exempting Tamil Nadu students from NEET

D.O. letter dated 20.04.2017 addressed by **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

"I would like to draw your kind attention to the need for expeditious assent of the two Bills passed unanimously by the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly for protecting the existing admission policy for Undergraduate and Postgraduate admissions in Government Medical and Dental Colleges. These Bills were reserved by the Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu for obtaining the assent of His Excellency the President of India under Article 254(2) of the Constitution of India. **This assent would enable the State to continue its existing fair and transparent system of admission to Medical Colleges and Dental Colleges in the State.**

Till now, the selection for admission for the 50 per cent State quota in the Postgraduate courses in Medicine and Dentistry in the State was made based on an entrance examination and experience. **As per the existing policy of the State, fifty per cent of the State quota seats in each specialty of the Postgraduate courses are allocated to doctors in Government service. On selection, the Government service doctors are required to serve the Government till superannuation while non-service doctors are required to serve the Government for a period of not less than two years after completion of the course. This ensures provision of quality health care to people of Tamil Nadu, particularly, those living in rural, remote and hill areas.**

The Government of India have since amended the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 and the Dentists Act, 1948 to conduct a uniform entrance examination to all Medical Educational Institutions and Dental Educational Institutions at the Undergraduate level and Postgraduate level which has made admission based on NEET mandatory even for State quota seats.

In the NEET prospectus issued by Government of India this year, it was clearly indicated that the admission process is to be undertaken and completed by the States/designated authorities/University using NEET-PG marks as per applicable regulations and/or their eligible criteria, reservation policy, benefit for in-service candidates, rural posting etc.

But the MCI Postgraduate Medical Education Regulations, 2000 as amended upto March 11th 2017, have provisions which are in

contradiction to the details given in the NEET prospectus Clause 9(IV) allows only 10 per cent of the marks obtained for each year of service in remote and /or difficult areas upto a maximum of 30 % of the marks obtained in NEET.

The remote and difficult areas are to be defined by the State Government/ Competent authority from time to time. Further, as per the clause 9(VII) of the said Regulations, 50 % reservation for in service candidates is limited to only Postgraduate Diploma courses.

These Regulations have not only brought to naught the admission policy presently followed by the State Government with regard to admission to State Quota seats in the Postgraduate courses but also are contrary to the NEET prospectus issued by Government of India. As a result provision of quality health care to needy people in rural and remote areas has been placed in jeopardy.

In-service doctors in Government of Tamil Nadu have also started an agitation, as the time tested policy of the State of providing incentives to Government In-service candidates has been impacted by the recent orders of the single judge of the Madras High Court on 17.04.2017 in the W.P.No.6031 of 2017 and W.M.P.No 6455 of 2017 **which has ruled that the admissions to Postgraduate courses should be strictly according to the MCI Postgraduate Medical Education Regulations, 2000.**

While the State Government is going on appeal against the single Judge order of the High Court, **it is now clear that in order to continue the present system of admission to Postgraduate courses in medicine and dentistry with statutory backing, the two Bills unanimously passed by the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly to protect the present State policy of admission to Government Medical and Dental Colleges under the State quota has to be expeditiously given assent to.** The assurances given by the Government of India which have also been indicated in the NEET Postgraduate Bulletin, that there will be no interference with the State Government's policy, except for the NEET examination, have not been adhered to. Alternatively, the MCI Postgraduate Medical Education Regulations must be amended to incorporate the State policy as contained in the proposed Bill awaiting Presidential Assent.

Similarly in the Bill for the State Quota seats for Undergraduate students,which is also awaiting Presidential assent, the State has repeatedly indicated that 98 % of the students of Tamil Nadu who appear in the State Board Examinations would be put to a tremendous disadvantage in NEET because they lack the resources to enroll in training institutions and access materials available to urban students. Consequently, a large number of socially and economically backward meritorious rural students who had earlier benefited by abolition of the Common Entrance Examination stand to lose out this year due to the mandatory NEET Examination. The apprehensions regarding safeguarding accrued socio-economic rights are now considerably heightened and they have to be safeguarded.

Hence, I request you to urgently redress this issue by expediting the Presidential assent to the pending State Bills namely the Tamil Nadu Admissions to Postgraduate Courses in Medicine and Dentistry Bill, 2017 (L.A.Bill No.8 of 2017) and the Tamil Nadu Admissions to MBBS and BDS Courses Bill, 2017 (L.A.Bill No.7 of 2017)".